The Marker Lamp

Volume 71 • Number 1 • March 2025

Enjoy the Journey to the Blues Express

Museums Throughout the LSR

plus:

Latest News on Convention Clinics

Digitial Track Planning

The Marker Lamp

The Official Publication of
The Lone Star Region of the
National Model Railroad
Association

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March 2025

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The editorial policy of The Marker Lamp, the official publication of The Lone Star Region, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroading, within the confines of good taste and responsibility. The Marker Lamp is published once each quarter by and for the members of The Lone Star Region of The National Model Railroad Association. Articles appearing in The Marker Lamp are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the officers or membership of The Lone Star Region or The National Model Railroad Association.

Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Steve Sandifer steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net

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Featured on the Blues Express 2025
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President's Message

by Donna Orr
donnalorrtx@gmail.com

Looking into the Future

What is on our minds lately? The Blues Express!

The Blues Express 2025 Lone Star Region Convention is a premier event for us. This convention provides a unique opportunity to explore the latest trends in model railroading, check out the clinics, connect with members you haven't seen in a while, and gain valuable knowledge on enhancing one's model train experience.

Attending the Blue Express 2025 is an invaluable experience for anyone passionate about model railroading. From networking and educational opportunities, the convention offers something for everyone. By participating in this event, members can expand their knowledge, and take their model railroading skills to new heights. And invite your friends.

What is new that is transforming our hobby?

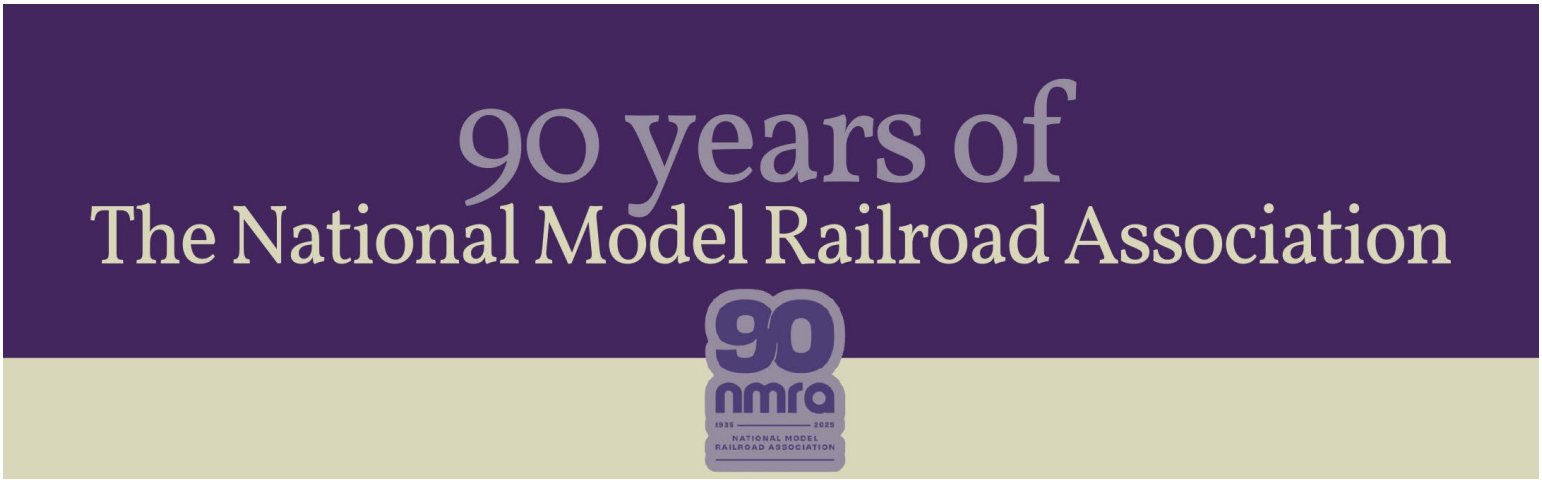
Besides being a long-time popular hobby, traditional methods of building model train components involving plastic molding, wood crafting, and metalworking have evolved. However, the advent of 3D printing has revolutionized the field, offering unprecedented customization, cost-efficiency, and accessibility. 3D printing is transforming model railroading by making it more customizable, affordable, and accessible. As the technology evolves, 3D printing will continue to shape the future of model railroading,

What else is going on this year?

This year, the NMRA marks an incredible milestone—90 years of dedication to the hobby of model railroading. Since its founding in 1934, the NMRA has been a driving force in standardization, education, and community building for model railroaders worldwide. This anniversary serves as a moment to reflect on our organization's rich history, its achievements, and the exciting future of model railroading. As we enter this 90th year model railroading continues to evolve - Digital advancements, 3D printing, new scenic techniques, etc.

The 90th anniversary of the NMRA is a testament to the enduring appeal of model railroading and our organization's unwavering dedication to the hobby. As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward to the continued growth and innovation that will shape the next chapter of model railroading for future generations.

See you in Baton Rouge!
Donna **ML**



From the Editor

by Peter Kazmir
peter@centexnmra.org

It Really Does Take a Village

It's a privilege to be the Editor of the *Marker Lamp*. I enjoy bringing together news from around the LSR as well as interesting and educational model railroading information that I hope you all enjoy.

At the same time, this position can be frustrating, because I can only publish content that other folks provide, including articles, columns, photos, and reports.

The LSR's purpose is centered around education - informing our region about this wonderful hobby and helping people learn about model railroading. That means that the *Marker Lamp* has two missions: to serve as the official record of the LSR, and to educate and inform readers about model railroading.

So, while our goal isn't to turn the *Marker Lamp* into a full-fledged magazine, it is our goal to include more content than just Board minutes and Director reports.

That's where you come in. A load shared is a load halved!

Many of us have been parts of groups who have worked together to build a large model railroad. That's the best part of our hobby - there's something for everyone, and it can be a very social experience.

The same applies to the *Marker Lamp*. There are a few people who reliably provide some excellent content, but it's a small percentage of LSR members.

So, I'd like to encourage all of you to consider submitting something. It doesn't have to be a lot (even one-page articles can be great), you don't have to be a great writer (I can help there; it's literally my job), heck you could just submit a set of photos. Have you shared some piece of knowledge on an online discussion board? Presented a clinic? Learned something new? Have an opinion of a new model you've recently purchased? Let's talk! I can help you turn that into content.

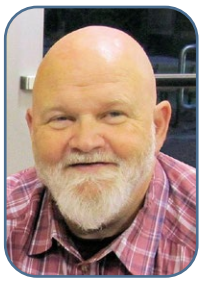
It doesn't have to be some advanced topic, either. There are always new folks in our hobby who are eager to learn, and if you're interested in something, I can guarantee you someone else is interested in it too.

And don't forget that publishing content in the *Marker Lamp* generates AP credit. The Model Railroad Author certificate is one of the easiest to earn (in my opinion).

Finally, if you are an officer, director, or committee chair, please remember to submit reports; it's part of the job. They don't have to be involved; one paragraph is a lot better than nothing.

Help to keep the fun in Model Railroading! **ML**

Up the Tracks Events Calendar



by Bill Dryden
LSR Events Chair

Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the *NMRA Magazine* and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me, via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

The Blues Express
2025 Lone Star Region NMRA Convention
June 26 - 29, 2025
Holiday Inn Baton Rouge South
9900 Airline Highway
Baton Rouge, LA 70816
Mark Your Calendar and Register Today!
https://bluesexpress2025.com

EVENTS AND SHOWS

April

12th – 13th — *(New Braunfels, TX)* **New Braunfels 37th Train Show Jamboree** (Sponsored by the New Braunfels Railroad Museum). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Adults $10 (14 and older), Children $3 (5-13 years old). New Braunfels Civic Center, 375 South Castell Avenue, New Braunfels, TX. More information: (830) 627-2447 or http://newbraunfelsrailroadmuseum.org/nbrr/train-shows/.

26th – 27th — *(Galveston, TX)* **Galveston Railroad Museum Railfest** (Sponsored by the Galveston Railroad Museum). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Members $15, Adults $20, Seniors and Active Military $12, Kids 14 and under $10, 2 and under Free. Harborside Express Train Rides $8 per person. Parking: $15 online, $20 at the gate. Galveston Railroad Museum, 2602 Santa Fe Place, Galveston, TX. More information: https://galvestonrrmuseum.org/railfest/ or (409) 765-5700.

May

17th — *(Jefferson, TX)* **2025 Swap Meet** (Sponsored by the Jefferson & Cypress Bayou Model Railroad Club). Sat. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. 1st Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 506 S. Line Street, Jefferson, TX. More information: Norman Buell at norbu1941@gmail.com.

June

24th – 28th *(Lubbock, TX)* **3rd Annual Summer Model Train Show at the American Windmill Museum** (Sponsored by the American Windmill Museum and the Lubbock Model Railroad Association). 10:00 am - 5:00 pm daily, Tues. June 24 - Sat. June 28. Admission is $5 per person, with kids 2 and under and AWM members getting in for free. American Windmill Museum, 1701 Canyon Lake Dr, Lubbock, TX. More information: https://lmra806.wordpress.com/ or https://windmill.com/event/2025-summer-model-train-show/.

August

23rd – 24th *(Austin, TX)* **Austin Train Show** (Sponsored by the Austin Model Railway Society). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission $8 in advance – $10 at the door, Children 12 and under FREE with adult. Admission includes both days Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX. More information: https://austintrainshow.org/.

31st – 1st *(Weatherford, TX)* **Clark Gardens Model Train Show**. Sat. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Adults $10, Seniors $8, Children 4 – 12 $5, Children 3 and under Free, Clark Gardens Members Free. Clark Gardens, 567 Maddux Road, Weatherford, TX. For more information: info@clarkgardens.org or https://www.clarkgardens.org/happenings/model-train-show.html or (940) 682-4856.

September

20th – 21st *(Temple, TX)* **43rd Annual Temple Model Train & RPM Show** (Sponsored by Central Texas Area Model Railroaders [CentraMOD]). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Adults $10, $1 discount for seniors and active duty military and dependents with ID, 12 and under Free. Frank Mayborn Center, 3303 N. 3rd Street, Temple, TX. More information: http://centramodrr.com/train-show/.

27th – 28th *(Dallas/Plano, TX)* **Fall Plano Train Show** (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs). Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Adults $10, Children 12 and under Free (w/Adult Admission). Plano Event Center, 2000 E Spring Creek Parkway, Plano, TX. More information: https://www.dfwtrainshows.com/.

October

4th *(Galveston/Texas City, TX)* **GCMRRC Annual Train Festival** (Sponsored by the Galveston County Model Railroad Club). Sat. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Texas City Museum, 409 6th Street, Texas City, TX. More information: http://www.gcmrrc.org/coming-events.html.

November

15th – 16th *(Houston/Pearland, TX)* **2025 Houston Area Model Train Show** (Sponsored by the Houston Area T-Trak Association, Inc.). Sat. 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Adults $7, 17 & Under Free. Knights of Columbus Hall, 2320 Hatfield Road, Pearland, TX. More information: https://houstonttrak.org/show/.

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 1 – Cowcatcher Division – Fort Worth, TX
The Cowcatcher Division meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Texas Western Model Railroad Club, 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. You can attend in person or via Zoom. For more information regarding the Cowcatcher Division or its programs, check their website: https://www.cowcatcherdivision.org.

LSR Division 2 - Bayou Division – Baton Rouge/New Orleans, LA
The Bayou Division meets quarterly at different locations. For information on future meetings contact Rod Fredericks at fredericks.rod@gmail.com.

LSR Division 3 - Trinity River Division – Allen, TX
The Trinity River Division meets at 10:00 am on the 3rd Saturday of every month at the Christ Servant Lutheran Church, Allen Texas. Occasionally things change due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the email meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting. If you would like to be added to the email list contact Robert Secrest at Robert.Secrest@hotmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin, TX
The Cen-Tex Division meets bi-monthly at the Austin Northwest Recreational Center, 2913 Northland Drive, Austin, TX. Meetings are held at 10:00 am on the 2nd Saturday of the *odd* months and include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see https://centexnmra.org or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to the mail list.

LSR Division 5 - West Texas Division
Division 5 holds their meetings virtually on Zoom on the 3rd Monday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. Anyone that can join via Zoom is welcome to attend. Use this link to sign up for the division's monthly bulletin and keep up with events and happenings in the division: http://eepurl.com/hRLLm9 or email Headroadie2004@gmail.com.

LSR Division 6 – South Texas Division – San Antonio, TX
The South Texas Division hosts quarterly meeetings at the Longhorn Cafe at 12311 Nacogdoches Road in San Antonio. Please come out and join us for clinics, show-and-tell, tip and tricks, and the ever-popular Deal-or-Duds, along with great fellowship. For more information contact Roy Kaiser at fr8train@gvtc.com.

LSR Division 8 - Texas Gulf Division – Houston, TX
The Texas Gulf Division meets the 2nd Saturday of the *odd* months from 10:00 am to 12 Noon at the Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Road, Houston, TX 77055. For more information contact Phil Stewart at pstewart1225@yahoo.com.

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Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio, TX
The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call (210) 490-3554 (weekends 9:00 am to 4:00 pm; voicemail only M-F) or visit the website at https://www.txtransportationmuseum.org/ho-scale-indoor-model-railroad.

All Points Model Railroad Association - Conroe, TX
The All Points North Model Railroad Association is open to new members and has business meetings in their clubhouse on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 10:30 am. For more information, including a calendar of activities, please visit their website at http://apnmrr.org/.

Austin Model Railway Society - Austin, TX
The Austin Model Railway Society is a HO scale modular group that is open to new members and meets once a month. For more information please email Steve Jackobs at president@austinrailway.org or visit the web site www.austinrailway.org.

The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroaders - Jackson, LA
Our mission: to educate and inform the public on the hobby of model railroading, associated disciplines, and to entertain both children and adults through our numerous displays featuring both model trains, real railroads and railroad safety. The Trains run from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month! THE PUBLIC IS INVITED! Located at the Republic of West Florida Historical Museum, 3406 College St, Jackson, LA. More information: http://www.greaterbrrailroaders.com/.

Houston Area "G" Gaugers - Rosenberg, TX
The Houston Area "G" Gaugers (HAGG) model train club meets at the Rosenberg Railroad Museum on the 4th Sunday of each month to run their special trains on the tracks of the Garden Railroad Exhibit. The museum also hosts fun seasonal activities for the kids on this day. Steam engines, circus trains, patriotic trains or everyone's favorite Thomas? You never know what trains you'll see. Rosenberg Railroad Museum, 1921 Avenue F, Rosenberg, TX. More information: info@RosenbergRRMuseum.org.

Houston Area Live Steamers - Hockley, TX
HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the 3rd Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White at rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum - New Braunfels, TX
Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street (in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot), New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities, additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Susan Riordon (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrrm.org.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving, TX
The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site, member clubs or sponsored events.

San Antonio Model Railroad Association - San Antonio, TX
The San Antonio Model Railroad Association, SAMRA, is open to new members and meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Bob Clarke Rail Heritage Museum, 7702 Narrow Pass, Live Oak, TX. Please visit our website www.samratx.org for information about our activities and their dates and times. Also, like us on Facebook.

Texas Northern Model Railroad Club – Dallas, TX (North)
The Texas Northern Model Railroad Club business meeting is the 1st Thursday of the month and has regular meetings on Thursday evenings and most Saturdays. If you like to operate, come by on Tuesday nights to join our weekly operation session. Located in North Dallas at 11999 Plano Road., Suite 154, Dallas, TX 75243. For more information: www.texasnorthern.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills, TX
The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org.

EXCURSION TRAIN TRIPS

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

Texas State Railroad; Palestine & Rusk, TX; (888) 987-2461; www.texasstaterr.com

Please consider our deadlines for submittals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event. Column submission deadlines are the 15th of February, May, August, and November. Publication of the *Marker Lamp* is the following month. ML

Whose track goes there?

Can you figure out whose layout this photo is from? If you are the first person to email the correct answer to rrrduino@huntatrophy.com you'll win a campfire lighting Arduino!

The photo in the December issue was of the late Brady McGuire's O scale (2 rail) Pennsylvania Railroad in Sherman, TX. DC powered with wireless engine control!

Make the Journey More Enjoyable

by Eric Smith
2025 LSR Convention Publicity Chair

It's time to start planning the trip to the Blues Express in Baton Rouge. Everyone says it's such a long trip and with all the traffic, I'm not sure I want to go. Oh, you do want to go! And, to top it all off I've got a list of places to visit along your way (Railroad-related of course)!

You know it's not just the journey, but how you make the journey and what you do on the journey that makes it more enjoyable. So, take a trip off the beaten path (interstates and major freeways) to take a look at some of the hidden gems the great states of Texas and Louisiana have to offer related to Railroading.

There are a lot of museums and exhibitions that you can visit, tour and even ride the rails. Everyone pretty much knows the old standards "ride the rails" part:

- The Grapevine Vintage Railroad - Grapevine
- The Texas State Railroad – Palestine/Rusk
- The Hill Country Flyer – Cedar Park
- San Antonio Zoo Eagle – San Antonio
- Forest Park Miniature Railroad – Ft. Worth
- Historic Jefferson Railway - Jefferson

But what about the museums with exhibits and memorabilia of the rails? I went looking for information about a multitude of different options in Texas and Louisiana that might just be a little side trip that you want to take a look at on your way to Baton Rouge. Who knows, you might see something new and want to model it!

They are In Alphabetical order:

- Burlington-Rock Island Railroad Museum – Teague, TX
- Cleburne Railroad Museum – Cleburne, TX
- Cotton Belt Railroad Depot Museum – Tyler, TX
- DeQuincy Railroad Museum – Lake Charles, LA
- The Dillion Depot – Cleburne, TX
- Eagle Lake Depot – Eagle Lake, TX
- Ennis Railroad & Cultural Heritage Museum – Ennis, TX
- Galveston Railroad Museum – Galveston, TX
- Granbury's Railroad Depot Museum – Granbury, TX
- Hearne Depot, Railroad & History Museum – Hearne, TX
- History Center – Diboll, TX
- Interurban Railway Museum – Plano, TX
- Lehnis Railroad Museum & Visitor Center – Brownwood, TX
- Llano River Railroad and Llano Railroad Museum – Llano, TX
- Louisiana Orphan Train Museum – Opelousas, LA
- McKinney Avenue Trolley – Dallas, TX
- Museum of the American Railroad – Frisco, TX
- New Braunfels Railroad Museum – New Braunfels, TX
- Quanah, Acme & Pacific Depot Railroad Museum – Quanah, TX
- Railroad Park and Museum – Smithville, TX
- Railway Museum of San Angelo – San Angelo, TX
- Red River Railroad Museum – Denison, TX
- Rosenberg Railroad Museum – Rosenburg, TX
- Shreveport Railroad Museum – Shreveport, LA
- Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum – Temple TX
- Texas and Pacific Railway Museum – Marshall, TX
- Texas Transportation Museum – San Antonio, TX
- Wichita Falls Railroad Museum – Wichita Falls, TX

This isn't the definitive list, but if you think you might want to visit one of these locations on your way to Baton Rouge, put it into the map program and see if it's on your route! I have included a link to each of these in the following along with a little information from each about their offerings and history as a museum. So, pick your route, and stop at one of these along the way.

Burlington-Rock Island Railroad Museum – Teague, TX
https://therailroadmuseum.wordpress.com/

This museum offers the visitor a trip back to Teague's history when railroads were the best option for travel out of the area and for commerce. The original structure, built in 1906, served as a hub for various railroads until 1966. At that time, the building was given to the City of Teague and later converted to a Railroad Museum by volunteers. The B RI Railroad Museum opened to visitors in 1970. Artifacts are displayed on every aspect of Teague history.

Cleburne Railroad Museum – Cleburne, TX
https://www.cleburne.net/1561/Cleburne-Railroad-Museum

On October 21, 1881 the first railroad pulled into Cleburne and was greeted by 1,000 spectators, one-quarter of the town's population. In 1897, Cleburne won out over Dallas, Fort Worth and Temple to become the location of the biggest Santa Fe shops west of the Mississippi, where they repaired and manufactured locomotives and other rail cars. The Cleburne Santa Fe Shops brought prosperity to Cleburne and were the largest employer for a century. While the Shops closed in 1989, the story of the railroad is an integral part of the history of Cleburne. After many years of planning, the Cleburne Railroad Museum opened to the public in November 2016 and now boasts a collection that encompasses over 2,000 railroad artifacts.

Cotton Belt Railroad Depot Museum – Tyler, TX
https://www.cottonbeltdepotmuseum.com/

The Saint Louis Southwestern Railroad, best known as the Cotton Belt, was originated in Tyler as the Tyler Tap, a narrow gauge line built to carry cotton and produce to the town of Big Sandy, Texas. The museum is located in the Cotton Belt Depot which served railroad passengers from 1905 until 1956. The museum provides memories of the operation of the Cotton Belt and a venue for the public, both young and old, to learn about the history of the railroad industry. The museum is operated by volunteers of the Tyler Tap Chapter of the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society.

DeQuincy Railroad Museum – Lake Charles, LA
https://www.dequincyrailroadmuseum1923.com/

The DeQuincy Railroad Museum is a non-profit corporation established in 1974 whose mission is to acquire, preserve, and display railroad artifacts of a bygone era and to heighten public awareness of the role of the railroad industry in our area as well as the region, state, and country. Housed in the 1923 Kansas City Southern Depot, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the museum has on display a large and varied collection of railroad memorabilia. Inside the museum you will enter through the gift shop/ welcome center. There is also a Baggage Room, and Agent's Office and a Large Waiting Room set up as it would have been during train travel complete with the original wooden benches and ticket window. Outdoors there is a covered pavilion with a 1947 Pullman coach car, a 1913 steam switch engine, and two vintage cabooses.

The Dillion Depot – Cleburne, TX
https://thedillondepot.com/

The Dillon Depot is a great place to take the family with something for just about everyone, or go yourself so you can browse on your own timetable. This is a relatively new gem. Admission is free and they are open from noon to 8:00 pm every day. The address is 302 North Anglin in downtown

Cleburne. This is a different attraction from the Cleburne railroad museum.

Eagle Lake Depot – Eagle Lake, TX
https://www.facebook.com/people/Eagle-Lake-Depot-Inc/100057251658969/

Eagle Lake Depot is a historic train depot located in Eagle Lake, Texas. The depot was constructed in 1887 and served as a major transportation hub for the area until the mid-20th century. The building is a classic example of Victorian architecture, featuring a red brick exterior, a steeply pitched roof, and decorative elements such as arched doorways and windows. Today, Eagle Lake Depot has been restored and serves as a museum and community center. Visitors can explore the depot's history through exhibits and displays that showcase the role it played in the development of the region's economy and transportation network. The depot also hosts a variety of community events, such as concerts, art shows, and festivals.

Ennis Railroad and Cultural Heritage Museum – Ennis, TX
https://www.ennistx.gov/museum

In 1871 the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, a

forerunner of the Southern Pacific Railroad, purchased 647 acres of land in Ellis County at a price of $5.00 per acre, establishing the line's northern terminus. On June 8, 1872, this site was established as the City of Ennis. The namesake of the town was Cornelius Ennis, an early official of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. In 1891, the Texas & New Orleans Railroad, a part of the Southern Pacific system, established a division point in Ennis, leading to the construction of shops and a roundhouse. The citizens of Ennis contributed $25,000, 90 acres of land, and a 43-acre lake toward the project. A contract was drawn up stating that the railroad could not move its shops out of town as long as the City of Ennis was able to provide water for the railroad's use. The railroad was the key to the development of Ennis as an agricultural, commercial, and later, an industrial center. According to early resident Joseph Baldridge, "If Ennis had not obtained the shops and the superintendent's offices, it would have remained only a small agricultural center." Ennis was able to successfully combine the natural resources of its rich farm land with the transportation advantages offered by the railroad. By the 1930's, Ennis had become known as the place "Where Railroads and Cotton Fields Meet."

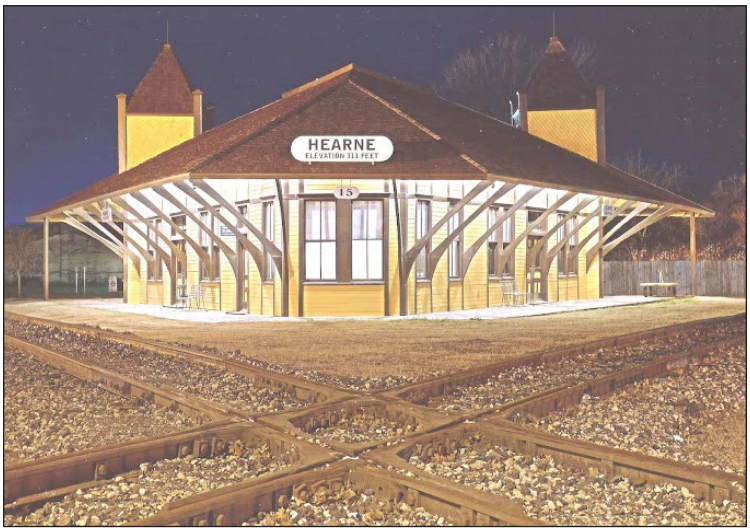
Galveston Railroad Museum – Galveston, TX
https://galvestonrrmuseum.org/

The Galveston Railroad Museum is a railroad museum housed in the former Santa Fe Railroad station, at 25th and Strand in Galveston, Texas. The Museum is owned and operated by the Center for Transportation and Commerce, a non-profit organization. You will probably want to stay at this restored station and explore the train replicas for many hours. The old Santa Fe Depot looks much the same as it did in its 1930s heyday. Multimedia studios will educate you on the history of rail transportation in the area.

Granbury Historic Railroad Depot - Granbury, TX
https://www.visitgranbury.com/listing/granbury-historic-railroad-depot/6139/

Built in 1914, the Granbury Historic Railroad Depot offers visitors a glimpse into the frontier days when railroads were a vital transportation link for towns.

Hearne Depot, Railroad and History Museum – Hearne, TX
https://hearnedepot.org/



Hearne is and always has been a railroad town. Since the 1870's, the Houston & Texas Central RR (Southern Pacific) and the International Railroad (Missouri Pacific) have crossed paths here. Eventually highway 6 and highway 79 paralleled these rail tracks, and also cross in Hearne. Today, railroaders from Houston (south), Ft Worth (north), Longview (east), and San Antonio (west) begin/end their work day in the Hearne area. Because of its location, Hearne has been, and still is, the center of railroad activity. The H & TC had reached from Houston to Millican (south of College Station) when the Civil War broke out and work was halted. Work was resumed after the war in 1868, and the tracks reached Hearne in 1869. A local farming family named Hearne donated land for a town so it was named after that family. The Hearne Depot was built in 1901 and served both SP and Mopac railroads for over 50 years.

History Center – Diboll, TX
https://www.thehistorycenteronline.com/exhibits/outdoor-railroad-exhibit

Built new for Texas Southeastern Railroad (TSE) of Diboll, Texas in 1920 by Baldwin Locomotive Works, Engine 13 is a 68-ton 4-6-0 or Ten-Wheeler steam locomotive. It was used regularly by TSE and Southern Pine Lumber Company (SPLCo) of Diboll as a mainline logging engine until replaced by TSE diesel-electric locomotive 22 in 1956. It then served extra duty periodically until 1964, when it was retired and placed on display. Temple-Inland donated the Engine to The History Center in 2002.

Interurban Railway Museum – Plano, TX
https://interurbanrailwaymuseum.org/

The Interurban Railway Museum, operated by the Plano Conservancy for Historic Preservation, Inc. and owned by the City of Plano, is a FREE history museum featuring interactive exhibits on electricity, science, and the history of the City of Plano and the Texas Electric Railway.

Lehnis Railroad Museum & Visitor Center – Brownwood, TX
https://www.brownwoodtexas.gov/228/Lehnis-Railroad-Museum

Located across the street from the historic Brownwood Santa Fe Depot and Fred Harvey House, the Martin & Frances Lehnis Railroad Museum exhibits the railroad history of Brownwood, Central Texas, and the American Southwest. The Lehnis Railroad Museum also serves as the Brownwood Visitor Center. Exhibits include a variety of railroad memorabilia and equipment, photos and stories of early railroads while vividly interpreting the importance of the railroad to this area and American life. Also on display are running model trains of every size.

Llano River Railroad and Llano Railroad Museum – Llano, TX
https://llanoriverrailroad.org/

The first railroad was the Austin and Northwestern, which brought passengers from Austin to Llano in 1892. It was built primarily to haul iron ore from the Llano 1890's boomtown days. In 1901 the Texas legislature approved the merger with the Houston & Texas Central Railroad. When the boom days ended, the train hauled passengers, livestock, cotton, grain, granite and other ores. The railroad ceased operation entirely in 1996. Thus, a century of use was laid to rest. Today, the railroad is remembered in a beautifully rebuilt "depot" that houses the Llano Railroad Museum and rail yard.

Louisiana Orphan Train Museum – Opelousas, LA
https://www.laorphantrainmuseum.com/

Between 1854 and 1929 two charity institutions, The Children's Aid Society and The New York Foundling Hospital, gathered resources to help the more than 250,000 homeless or abandoned children living on the streets of New York City. The plan was to take as many children off the streets of New York and place them into rural homes across America. The Orphan Train Movement is recognized as the beginning of the modern foster care system. It was responsible for bringing more than 2,000 children to Louisiana. Despite the hardship of leaving their only known life behind, those children rode the orphan trains for new and better lives. The last orphan train ride to Louisiana was in 1929. It was in that year the program ceased in large part due to growing measures by state legislatures across the country to restrict or forbid the interstate placement of children.

McKinney Avenue Trolley – Dallas, TX
https://www.mata.org/

The McKinney Avenue Transit Authority (MATA) was founded in 1983 to return streetcar service to Dallas. From its first trolley in July 1989, the M-Line has been celebrated by millions of Dallas residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

Museum of the American Railroad – Frisco, TX
https://www.historictrains.org/

Founded in 1962, the Museum of the American Railroad is a not-for-profit Texas corporation dedicated to celebrating the heritage and exploring the future of railroads through historic preservation, research, and educational programming. The museum collects artifacts and archival material from the railroad industry to exhibit and interpret their significance in American life and culture. Exhibits and general programs are provided year-round. Educational programs are available to local schools and universities through study trips, in-class programming & outreach, and online resources.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum – New Braunfels, TX
https://newbraunfelsrailroadmuseum.org/nbrr/

The museum has a variety of artifacts and photographs from the golden age of railroading on display. Many of them are directly related to operations of the International & Great Northern (IGN), Missouri Pacific (MoPac), and Missouri, Kansas and Texas (MKT) railroads all of which operated in New Braunfels. During your self-guided tour, you can view displays in the renovated 1907 International & Great Northern depot, an 0-6-0T locomotive, boxcar, caboose, and a 1922 Pullman

passenger car which has been renovated into a dining car and is available for rental. Other displays include railroad china, a rare velocipede, restored baggage carts, railroad signals, local area railroad photos, lanterns, and other tools required of the railroad employee to get his job done. Additionally, they have five model railroad layouts in various scales.

Quanah, Acme & Pacific Depot Railroad Museum – Quanah, TX
https://texastimetravel.com/directory/quanah-acme-pacific-railway-depot-museum/

Located one block west of Main Street in downtown Quanah, the historic Quanah, Acme & Pacific Depot is a remarkably handsome example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture (many consider the depot to be one of the best examples of this distinct style in the state). The depot was constructed in 1909 to serve as a passenger depot and railway offices for the main line of the Quanah, Acme & Pacific Railroad. The depot was designed by Page Brothers Architects, the Austin-based architecture firm that was also responsible for designing over half a dozen courthouses across the state. The depot is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is under the care of the Hardeman County Historical Society. The depot museum houses an extensive collection of artifacts and exhibits exploring the history of the surrounding

region. Items from Hardeman County's pioneer and railroad days as well as artifacts connected to Quanah Parker occupy the first floor of the museum while upstairs exhibits include a Veterans Room, the Quanah Cotton Oil Mill, and a "Space Room" furnished by NASA and the Smithsonian Institute. Recently added is a QA&P train display donated by collector Fred Holland.

Railroad Park and Museum – Smithville, TX
https://www.smithvillerailroadpark.org/museum.html

Whether you're a railroad aficionado, or just enjoy the charm of small, historic towns, the James H. Long Railroad Park and Museum in Smithville, Texas, welcomes you. Smithville was a sleepy village of about 65 people when the Taylor, Bastrop & Houston Railroad came through in 1886, the year that changed everything. In 1891, the Missouri, Kansas & Texas (MK&T, or Katy) Railroad took over and, in 1894, established Smithville as the first maintenance yard south of Waco. By 1909, about 400 Katy workers headquartered in Smithville, which had become the largest town in Bastrop County with a population of about 3,500, including several grocery and department stores, blacksmith shops, saloons, cafes, and hotels. Smithville's Railroad Museum is chock full of engaging exhibits of authentic railroad artifacts, all of which tell Smithville's railroad story from its first one-room office through the large second and third depots, until the end of passenger service and the maintenance facility in Smithville. Stories are told through pictures and newspaper headlines, video and exhibits of railroad disasters, the Railroad YMCA where transitory workers stayed, and loads of railroad lanterns, telegraph keys, typewriters, passenger tickets, and other items used in day-to-day operation.

Railway Museum of San Angelo – San Angelo, TX
https://www.sanangelorailway.org/

The Railway Museum of San Angelo, established as the Historic-Orient Santa Fe Depot, Inc., is housed is a historic railway depot located in the San Angelo Cultural District. The depot was constructed between 1909-1910 as the Texas headquarters of Arthur Stilwell's Kansas City, Mexico and

Orient Railroads (KCM&O). When completed, the KCM&O Railroad would have provided an economical transportation route connecting the lucrative markets of the Orient through the Mexican port of Topolobampo and via a direct rail line through Texas including San Angelo to Kansas. Instability in the US and Mexico prevented Stilwell from realizing his dream, but the depot remained. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Company purchased KCM&O, including the depot in 1928. It became known as the Santa Fe Passenger Depot and served San Angelo until 1985 when rising costs cause the closure of all local passenger and freight operations. When Santa Fe announced plans to demolish the depot in the late 1980's, San Angelo citizens initiated a campaign to preserve the building. Today the depot houses the museum which was established in 1996.

Red River Railroad Museum – Denison, TX
https://redriverrailroadmuseum.org/

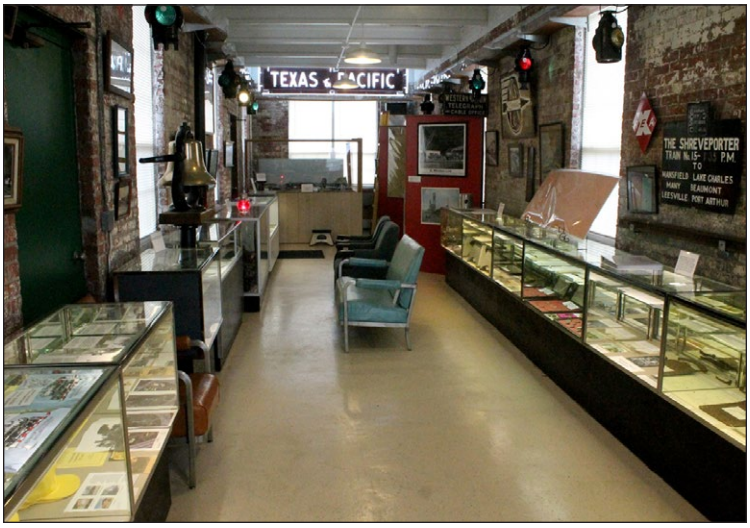
The Red River Railroad Museum illuminates the role of railroads in Denison and North Texas, past and present by collecting, preserving, studying, and interpreting objects, documents, and visual materials. The Museum disseminates the history of the Missouri Kansas Texas (Katy) Railroad and the importance it played in the creation and growth of Denison, Texas. A group of forward thinking individuals started the

Museum in 1987 with collections being housed in the historic Katy Depot in Denison, Texas.

Rosenberg Railroad Museum – Rosenburg, TX
https://www.rosenbergrrmuseum.org/

The idea to create the Rosenberg Railroad Museum began in 1992 when a group of citizens formed a committee to establish a museum designed to preserve the railroad history of Fort Bend County. By 1993, committee chairman Judge Larry Wagenbach convinced the Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe Railway Company to donate 1.47 acres of land on the west side of 3rd Street and north of Avenue F in downtown Rosenberg which became home to the Rosenberg Railroad Museum. In the summer of 1994, the museum prepared a foundation for the rail car and the Quebec arrived at the site in the summer of 1995, ready for restoration to begin. The Houston Area G Gaugers and RRM began planning a Garden Railroad exhibit to depict Fort Bend County in the 1950s. The layout broke ground in the summer of 2014 and the first trains were up and running by Christmas of that year.

Shreveport Railroad Museum – Shreveport, LA
https://shreveportwaterworks.org/railroad-museum/



The railroad museum building was opened in 2013 and has provided a look into the historic use of steam for transportation to complement the big stationary steam pumping engines in the main building. A favorite display in the railroad museum, particularly for the youngsters, is a working HO-scale model railroad depicting downtown Shreveport in the 1960's.

Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum – Temple TX
https://www.templeparks.com/facilities___rentals/temple_railroad___heritage_museum/index.php

The Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum was founded in 1973 to collect, preserve and exhibit the history of the railroads and local history of Central Texas. The original collection was housed in the 1907 Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe depot in Moody, TX. In 1996, an Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act grant for renovating the Temple Santa Fe depot, which had been vacated by the railroad and was destined for demolition, was applied for and received. Three years later, in 1999, work on the restoration began. Dedication of the restored depot took place on July 8, 2000, and this beautifully restored building is now the home of the museum. It is located next to an active railroad yard, where railfans can take in the operations and traffic of the BNSF and Amtrak. The museum's collection of railroad equipment is displayed on the grounds, including three locomotives, railroad passenger cars and cabooses.

Texas and Pacific Railway Museum – Marshall, TX
https://marshalltxdepot.com/

The Marshall station was built in 1912 by the Texas & Pacific (T&P) Railroad and contained a waiting room as well as the company's eastern regional administrative offices. The three-story, 7,500 square foot structure is the only survivor of a once bustling 66-acre shop complex comprised of 75 buildings that included a roundhouse, car shops, a water tower, and a warehouse. Today, the beautifully restored depot houses an Amtrak stop and the Texas & Pacific Railway Museum. The exterior has remained essentially the same since its construction. The striking red brick building is outlined in white and features a projecting center bay with a prominent porch, giving the station a homey-feel. The interior has been significantly altered over the years to meet modern railroad needs. During a major rehabilitation in 1999, whitewash was removed and the original red brick restored. The former T&P 2-8-2 Mikado #400 and a Union Pacific caboose stand on the surrounding grounds. From the depot's upper-level balcony, visitors can survey the town, including the Harrison County Courthouse (1901) and the historic Ginocchio Hotel (1896).

Texas Transportation Museum – San Antonio, TX
https://www.txtransportationmuseum.org/

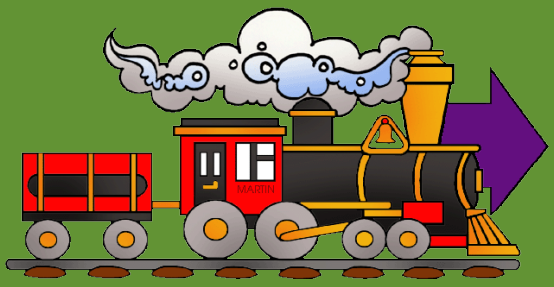
At the Texas Transportation Museum, visitors have the opportunity to explore an extensive collection of vehicles from Texas' transportation past. From classic cars and vintage locomotives to trucks and other modes of transportation, you can get up close and personal with these remarkable exhibits. Moreover, guests can also partake in unique train rides around the museum grounds. The museum also features exhibits dedicated to early road transportation, providing a comprehensive look at the evolution of transportation in Texas and beyond.

Wichita Falls Railroad Museum - Wichita Falls, TX
https://wfrrm.co/

The Fort Worth and Denver City Railway Company brought the first passenger train into Wichita Falls on September 27,

1882. Crowds of townsfolk anxiously awaited the arrival of the small locomotive that pulled in a work train and passenger coach that carried about 250 passengers from Fort Worth area. At last, this prairie village astride ancient Indian and buffalo trails had its steel rails of commerce which transformed it into a bustling city on the Great Plains. Wichita Falls was the end of the line for the Fort Worth and the Denver City Railroad for the next 20 months, and thus made the village prosper like nothing else could.

ML



Wanted!
Nominees for the LSR Youth Award

Who: Any boy or girl 18 years old or younger with an interest in model railroading

Where: One nominee from each LSR Division

A past awardee: May be renominated for another year if they meet the qualifications specified in the LSR Constitution. **Contact Chuck Lind** chucklind46@gmail.com

How: Fill out the special Youth Award Membership Form available on http://www.lonestarregion.com/

When: Submit your nomination to your LSR Division Director **today**!

For more information contact:
Chuck Lind, Youth Chairman: chucklind46@gmail.com

Join the new Lone Star Region
Member Directory

The LSR is building a new member directory. We wish to emphasize that participation is entirely optional. Only information provided by participants will be included, and visibility is limited to LSR members - the directory will not be publicaly accessible on the internet.

We encourage all members to participate. The directory will be especially valuable for members looking for model railroads to visit while travelling throughout the region.

To participate, simply click this link below to access the directory form and enter your information: https://forms.gle/k984mbh7RazPKs6o8

Note that it is not necessary to have a Google account to log in or to use the form. If you have any questions about the directory, please contact Chuck Lind at chucklind46@gmail.com.

Convention Updates

The Clinics Keep Coming!

by Eric Smith, Publicity Chair

The time is upon us to register for the Blues Express in Baton Rouge, June 26-29, 2025. The convention will be filled with fun and educational activities for both model railroaders and for their families, and it will be in a region that has a bounty of interesting scenic and historical sites and is in the heart of Cajun food country.

This month I'd like to highlight three clinics that have been added to the schedule.

Let me start with a Make and Take clinic presented by LSR's own Achievement Program (AP) chairman Duane Richardson, MMR. Duane will be leading this clinic where you will be building a speeder shed. This class has limited seats as the room will only accommodate 18 people. You will need to furnish your own tools (but the list is pretty basic) and purchase the shed components (but they're available in N, HO, S, and O scale and the fee is pretty small). All the details are on the clinic page at https://bluesexpress2025.com/make-take/.

If you don't know who Duane is, let me introduce you to him: Duane is a lifelong modeler with too many accomplishments for me to even list in a short email. He is MMR #391 and along with his father, MMR #345, became the first father-and-son MMRs. Duane is our region's AP Chairman and is always eager to help with a tip or trick to help you "become a better modeler". He has presented clinics locally, regionally and nationally on topics too numerous to mention, but are always detail-oriented and relevant for any modeler, for any scale.

How about a clinic on weathering a diesel locomotive? Or track planning a layout? These two clinics will be presented by Walt Liles. He has been a member since 2003 of the Piedmont Division of the Southeast Region (SER) of the NMRA. He is currently serving as Director of Operations and is a past Superintendent, Director of Operations, and Director. Walt has served as the Secretary with the SER for 2 terms and was the Chairperson for the SER 2023 Cartersville Express Convention. He is a member of the North Atlanta Rail Barons and the Tri-State Model Railroaders.

Walt has been a model railroader for over 53 years and his passion is the Clinchfield Railroad & Seaboard Coast Line RR in HO. Coal is king in his world, preferring the 1970s-1980's but he has lots of equipment of all decades. Walt is a native of Savannah, GA and lives in Marrietta, GA, northwest of Atlanta in the suburbs.

First, Walt will be presenting a clinic on weathering a diesel locomotive covering a certain look with diesels. This includes where to look for key details in weathering a diesel locomotive and looking at the effects of weathering with different colors of locomotives. Walt will use many different weathering products and techniques to make that new locomotive look aged and used. This is a fun clinic to learn some techniques about weathering applications.

Secondly, Walt will have a clinic covering layout design that will go over track planning including different aspects of the track, grades, space limitations and fitting specific industries into your layout. He will be discussing different elements of track and why we do certain things on our layouts. Just like the prototype we need certain items on our model layouts just like the railroads. This is a very informative clinic that will help you plan expansion to your current layout of aid you with your next layout.

These are just two of the presenters and three informative clinics that you can see at the Blues Express. But wait! There's more!!! Look for more emails coming soon to highlight more of the activities, clinics, and things to do at the Blues Express. By the way, did I mention the Cajun food? Please register today and come enjoy the fun or as the Cajuns say: "Laissez les bons temps rouler"… Let the Good Times Roll! **ML**

You can build this speeder shed!

12"x12"x12" Diorama Special Contest Rules

by Ray Byer, Contest Publicity Chair

The 12"x12"x12" Diorama Contest will follow the same LSR Contest Rules as for "Displays/Modules":

"Displays/Modules" - Models or modules which include supplemental scenery. For a model to be in the display/module category, the scenery elements are not pertinent to the function of the model or primary structure. The display can be an on-line or off-line model or models.

With the following dimensions, 12"x12"x12", means 12 inches in width, 12 inches in depth, and 12 inches in height, basically a cube. These measurements are the same for ALL scales.

There will be a gauge used for these measurements. If the model does not fit in our cube, the model will be disqualified.

The following must be contained in the Diorama and MUST be listed in the write-up specifically noting where that item is located on the Diorama:

1) An old shack, outbuilding, or store.
2) Pepsi, RC Cola, or Dixi beer sign.
3) Water in the form of a creek, river, pond, bayou, rain barrel, water tank or other, must be easily visible.
4) TWO railroad Items must be present and visible. In the write-up you must show examples to back up your picks.
5) A Cypress Tree or a tree that would appear in a Louisiana swamp must be present. In the write you must show examples to back up your pick.
6) Magnolia in the form of a tree, flower, signage, advertising or other. The item must be present and visible. In the write-up you must show examples to back up your pick.
7) Clock, it must be visible.

Put on your Thinking Caps on and have fun! More information to follow.If you have questions, please e-mail the LSR contest Chairperson, Ray Byer. **ML**

Looking for more Blues Express 2025 News?

by Rod Fredericks, Convention Chair

You can always check out https://bluesexpress2025.com for the latest updates. In case you missed them, you can also read these articles from previous issues of the Marker Lamp:

June 2024 Issue

- Division 2 report focusing on convention planning (p49)

September 2024 Issue

- Rod Fredericks' Silver Valley & Zenith railroad, which will be open during the convention (covers)
- *Make Tracks for the Blues Express*, featuring sights and places to see in the Baton Rouge area (p11-13)
- *Railfanning Baton Rouge* (p14-16)
- The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroaders (p17-20)
- Introduction to the Clinics at the convention (p21)
- Special 12" x 12" x 12" Diorama Contest rules (p21)

December 2024 Issue

- Mike Waldorf's L&N railroad (covers)
- *Whet Your Appetite for the Blues Express*, featuring the outstanding dining int he Baton Rouge area (p9-14)
- Convention Updates (p15-16)
- The Crescent City Model Railroad Club (p17-20)
- Division 2 report focusing on the convention (p43) **ML**

Track Planning on Your Computer

by Cliff Scherer

Many modelers consider track planning one of the fun parts of the hobby. After all, most of us spend lots of time thinking about the plan before we ever start building. But how do you get that track plan from your head to your layout?

You can use the most flexible method: simply start building and laying track. There are many modelers who don't glue down the track – it's tacked down so that easy, quick changes can be made on the fly. Others use pencil and paper with varying degrees of scale accuracy. Some may sketch the track on graph paper. Others may use manual drafting techniques with compass and T-square or a track planning template. In the computer age many are turning to CAD software to design their track plan.

There is no right or wrong method – in model railroading the mantra is "it's your railroad so you do it your way". That's the way it should be – if you're having fun then you've succeeded in the hobby.

For those willing to try software to design their track plan, there are many options. Before we look at those, let's talk about the types of software available.

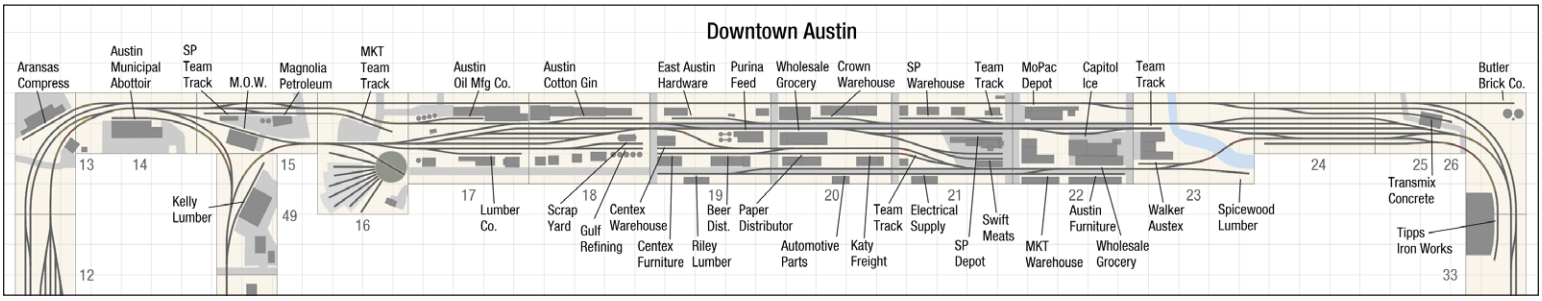
All software that is typically used for track planning is CAD (computer aided design) software. But there are differences. Professional CAD programs are full-featured and can handle everything from designing a nuclear power plant to a model railroad track plan – if you know how to use them. An example would be AutoCAD by AutoDesk. These programs are often expensive, have steep learning curves, and do not have pre-defined elements like track libraries for use in track planning. They are suitable for those already proficient with the program, but probably not useful for most modelers.

On the other hand, dedicated model railroad track planning software programs have been designed from the ground up to help modelers design track plans. The better ones have features such as these:

- A relatively intuitive interface helps the user quickly learn the program.
- Extensive learning tools are available such as YouTube training videos and extensive Help libraries.
- Track libraries allow you to select the specific pieces of track you will buy such as turnouts and flex track (see Figure 1).
- Track inventories log the pieces by manufacturer and part number, essentially creating your shopping list.
- Designing in layers helps in several ways (more on this later).
- The ability to print the layout in virtually any size from an 8.5"x11" sheet to 1:1 size for laying out track on the actual layout.

With all these features we can see several advantages to using track planning software:

- Make unlimited revisions quickly.
- What-if scenarios are easy to design.
- Exact track geometry including turnouts, radii, and grades – no fudging.
- Get an accurate shopping list for your track needs. Plan using the exact track (flex, turnouts, turntables, etc) by manufacturer and part number.
- Get realistic and specific on aisle widths around the layout.



Track Planning Software can be used for complex layouts such as the Austin Model Railway Society layout. This is just one side of the large layout. Drawing in Anyrail by Peter Kazmir.

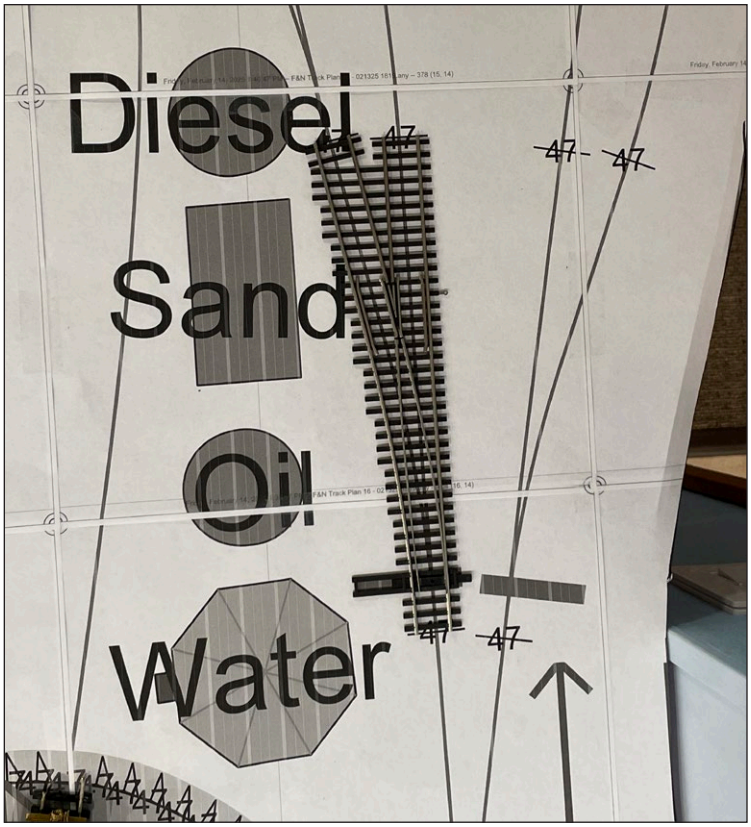


Figure 1: Most Track Planning Software provides a track library that results in great accuracy. Here, a Walthers LH #5 p/n 83015 turnout was specified in the software, printed on the full-size track template and overlaid by a real Walthers turnout. The dimensions in the program are exact.

- Plan benchwork – what wood to buy, how much, where to cut, etc.
- Print the entire track plan or parts of it in full-size for exact placement on the layout.
- Create professional looking images of your layout plan.

Up to now we've looked at how great track planning software can be, but there are downsides. These software tools are not for everyone, so let's consider some negatives:

- Learning curve. Learning a new computer program can be time-consuming. There's nothing wrong with that, but if it's not for you, the other track planning methods are always available.
- Confined to the track inventory available in the software.
- Most track planning software does not handle planning hand-laying track very well. Because these programs are based on specific track libraries, they don't provide geometry that varies, for example, in turnouts.
- Overkill for the track planning task. Some modelers find that their time is better spent on simpler methods and that track planning software can cause a bit of procrastination.

As with most things, track planning software is great for some and not needed for others. I know many folks who have found it very useful and enjoyable so let's get further into it.

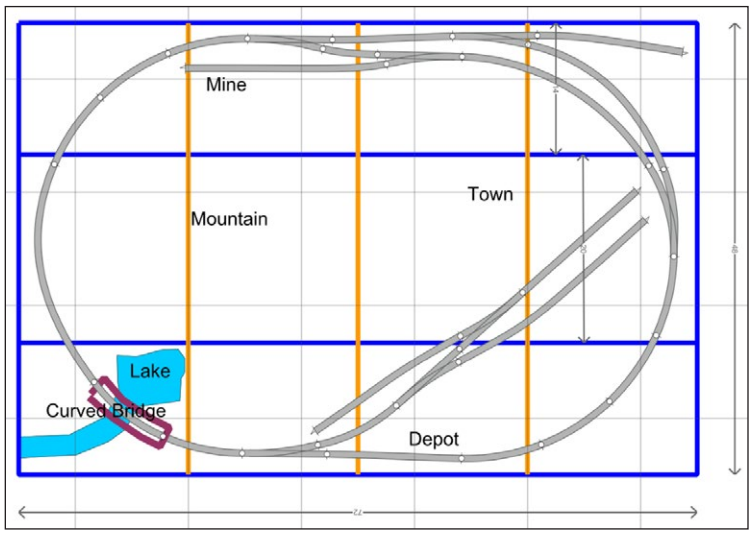
Choosing Track Planning Software

There are several good track planning programs available, so how do you choose? Figure 2 shows a list of currently available track planning software. In choosing, you should take into account not only price and functionality, but also the level of support available and how much community discussion there is on the Internet regarding your chosen software. More Internet discussion is better as it improves your results for quick "how to" searches for specifics in your application. Also, look at the support available from the software developer. For example, Anyrail and SCARM both have extensive help libraries within the program.

If you like to nose around a new application and push buttons to see what happens, then download the free versions and check them out. For most folks, it will be better to pick one and watch the software developers' basic tutorial YouTube video before you try out the free downloaded version. After a casual search of the Internet and in talking with fellow modelers, it appears that Anyrail and SCARM are among the most widely used in the U.S., so you might start with either of those.

The best way to try out the free version after watching a basic how-to video is to try creating a 4'x8' oval layout with flex track for the curve on one end and sectional track on the other. Add a passing siding and an industry spur. Get progressively more complex by adding a flex track curve to the spur and adding a grade up and back down on one side of the layout. By that point, or maybe earlier you'll know whether the program is for you.

An interesting contrast between Anyrail and SCARM is



Basic designs can be done in minutes once you're familiar with the software. Notice how the lake can be planned so that the beams and joists don't interfere with it. This is true for planning powered switch locations as well.

Application	Required Operating System	Cost	Free Version	Notes
Anyrail	Windows	$ 65.00	Yes - Limited	Extensive Track Library, Some find it intuitive, Free Version is limited to 50 sections of track
Atlas	Windows	$ 45.00	Demo only	Limited to Atlas track, this appears to be a repackaged version of SCARM
Empire Express	Mac	$ 29.99	Yes - Limited	One of 2 apps specifically for Mac; The free version is called Empire Express Basic
Rail Modeller	Mac	$ 44.99	Yes - Limited	One of 2 apps specifically for Mac; The free limited version is called Rail Modeller Express
SCARM	Windows	$49.90	Yes - Limited	Extensive Track Library; Some find it intuitive; Free version is limited to 100 objects.
3rd PlanIt	Windows	$124.95	Yes - Limited	Appears to support better 3-D drawing capabilities than others; Has tools for benchwork planning; Free version is limited to 100 objects and does not allow
XTrkCAD	Windows/Mac/Linux	Free	Free	Open Source software; The only one that is written to run on mulitple operating systems; Support is via an .io group

Figure 2: List of Track Planning Applications in Alphabetical Order (not ranked)
Note: Track planning software that has not been updated in the last two years is excluded from the list.

the difference in how objects are handled. These differences go to personal preferences so one person may find Anyrail more intuitive while someone else may find SCARM more intuitive. An example is in how objects are moved. In Anyrail you can move a piece of track by left clicking on it, dragging it and then dropping it – very Windows-like. In SCARM, you move an object by clicking on it, holding down the CTRL key and dragging it with the mouse. Either way works fine, it's all about what you're comfortable with.

Using Track Planning Software

Let's use Anyrail as the example for this section. You can download the Anyrail free version here: https://www.anyrail.com/download.

Next, you'll probably want to get the basics before you try to create a track plan. Anyrail does a nice job of getting you started with a series of 6 short tutorial videos. These average only 2 minutes each and are straight to the point. Watch the tutorials here: https://www.anyrail.com/tutorials.

Once you've seen the tutorials, launch the program and create a very basic track plan to get comfortable with the software. As you start on a track plan for your layout here are a few tips and tricks to be aware of.

Track Plan Versions and File Names

Most of us will create many versions of a track plan before we settle on the best one. For my layout, the Fredericksburg & Northern, I created 16 versions containing major changes, with minor revisions within versions. This may seem excessive, but in reality, it takes very little time to make very big changes.

Why create versions? It allows you to create "what-if" track plan changes and then quickly get back to where you were if you decide against the changes. It also provides a way to copy elements from previous versions and re-use them on newer versions.

On the F&N, one of the early versions had the main line crossing over itself at the base of the middle peninsula. This provided a longer main line run and broader curves. But friends advised against it due to the confusion it would create in operations. Not knowing if it would work, I created a new version where the crossover was eliminated without tightening radii too much. In doing so, I wanted to be able to get back to the original design, which was provided by saving file versions.

How do you work with versions? Simply create your first track plan version and save it as version 1. The next time you open the file to make a change use "Save As" and enter the new version number along with the date and time it was created. In order to keep the versions straight consider a naming convention similar to this:

`C:\Anyrail\Track Plans\<track_plan_name_VV_mmddyy_hhmm>.any`

In this case the file version number is VV, the date created is mmddyy and the time created is hhmm. For the F&N, the latest version is:

`C:\Anyrail\Track Plans\F&N_Track_Plan_16_022425_2049.any`

so this is version 16 and was created on February 24, 2025 at 8:49pm (the file name uses 24 hr. time).

Why enter the date and time? A new version is generally when the track plan is changed so that the way it is operated is different or the way it looks overall is different. For example, a change from having the main line cross over itself versus not doing so would be different version numbers. You may also make revisions that are minor, and these would be indicated by a file of the same version number, but different date and time. A revision might be something like changing the length

of a spur track or other minor track changes.

A final note on versions. You can open 2 instances of Anywhere at the same time on your computer. That means you can have 2 versions of your track plan open at once for comparison. If you have a wide screen monitor or a dual monitor setup, this becomes even more valuable.

Getting the Settings Right

In most Track Planning programs there are several variable settings that you should set according to your preference. These also impact how the program alerts you to problems with your design. In Anyrail, the settings are changed in "Settings" tab. Some of the settings that you will need to set upfront in Anyrail are:

- Measurement System (English/metric/fractional/decimal)
- Minimum radius for your layout (Anyrail allows 3 different minimums so that you can have a minimum radius for the mainline that differs from other areas like a branch line.
- Maximum grade %
- Minimum vertical clearance if you will have track crossing above lower track.
- The size of the work area. This should be set somewhat larger than the layout room or table that you will be planning. It is precise and measured in inches, if that's what you set in the measurement system. Making your work area 1' larger than you layout area is a good idea.

There are some settings in Anyrail that you will want to change as you work in the track plan:

- Grid – for English measurements, this is best left at 12" for most overall track work and changed to 1" for more detailed work. Use the 1" grid when you zoom in and want to get careful on clearances and positioning. You can change back and forth from 12" to 1" as needed. To show the grid, check the box next to "Grid". Figure 3 shows the grid set to 1" and zoomed in on a small section of the track plan.
- Snap to Grid should be left unchecked for most work, but you may want to use it for example, when placing rectangles to represent buildings when you have the grid size set to 1". This setting will cause objects to snap to the nearest grid line.

Working with Layers

One of the nice features in most track planning software is the ability to create layers as you draw your plan. Simply put, any object (track, building, benchwork, etc.) can be assigned

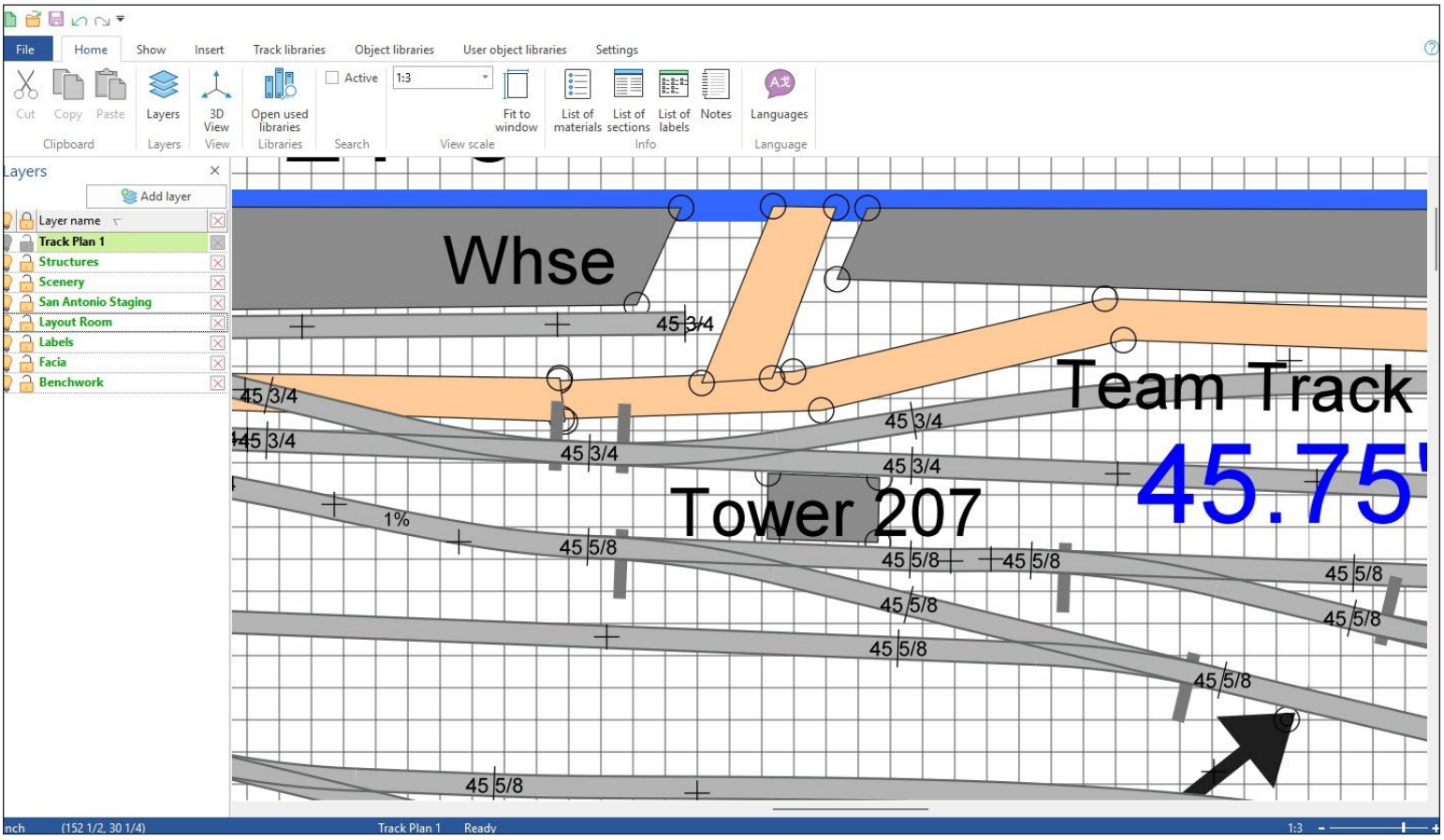


Figure 3: The grid has been set to 1" and the track plan has been zoomed in to Tower 207. This granularity helps to determine what fits, or what doesn't fit as in the case of Tower 207. Note that the settings show the track from railhead to railhead. This can be changed to show centerline only.

to a layer. Each layer can be turned on and off so that you can filter the view of your work. Look at it as several drawings on transparent sheets – if you lay them all on top of each other you see all drawings, but if you remove a sheet, you only see what is still in the stack. View layers in Anyrail by selecting "Layers" from the "Home" ribbon menu at the top of the screen.

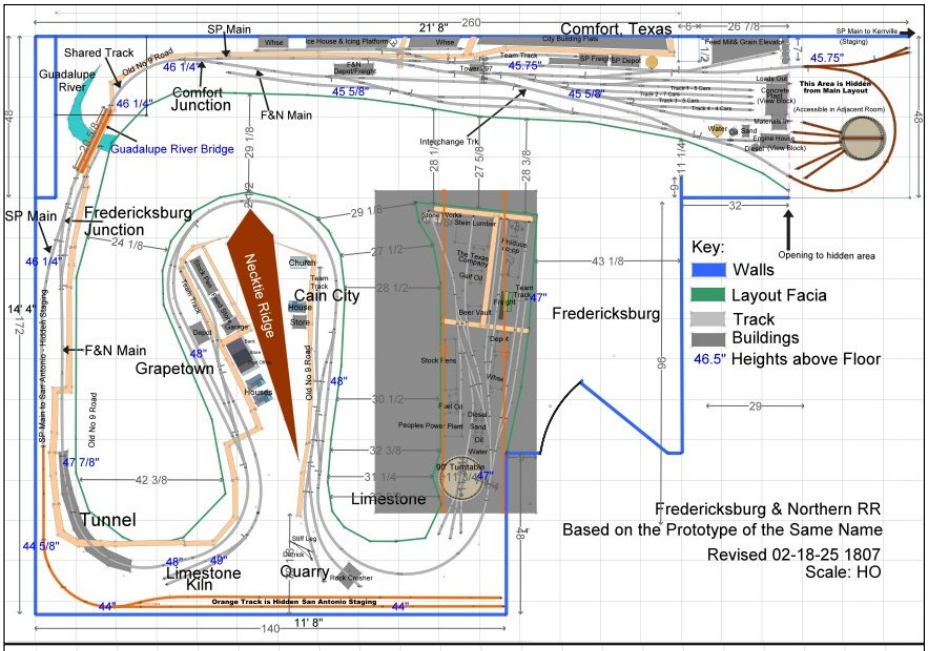
It's best to create separate layers for track, benchwork, structures, and scenery. Hint: in Anyrail, objects will automatically be assigned to the last selected layer, but you can move them to a different layer by selecting them and then selecting the correct layer in the ribbon menu at the top. Figures 4, 5, and 6 show how layers can help to get clear views of your plan.

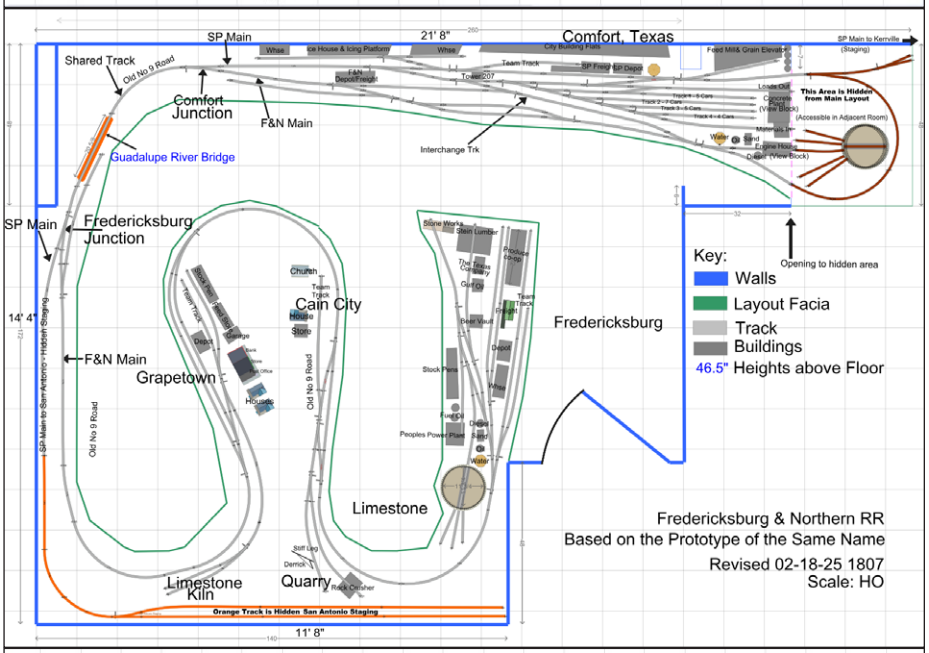
Mistakes and the "Undo" function

Don't be timid when working in the program – you can always undo what you just did. For example, in Anyrail, if you use the mouse to click and drag one piece of track that's already connected to the rest of the layout, it will drag the entire layout with it. No worries, I do it all the time by accident – just click the undo arrow or press CTRL-Z. By the way, if you do want to move that single piece of track, right click on it and left click "Disconnect" in the pop-up menu.

Printing the Track Plan

One nice thing about Anyrail is that it creates a vector-based file. That simply means that you can print it at just about any size you want without distortion or pixelization. There are several good





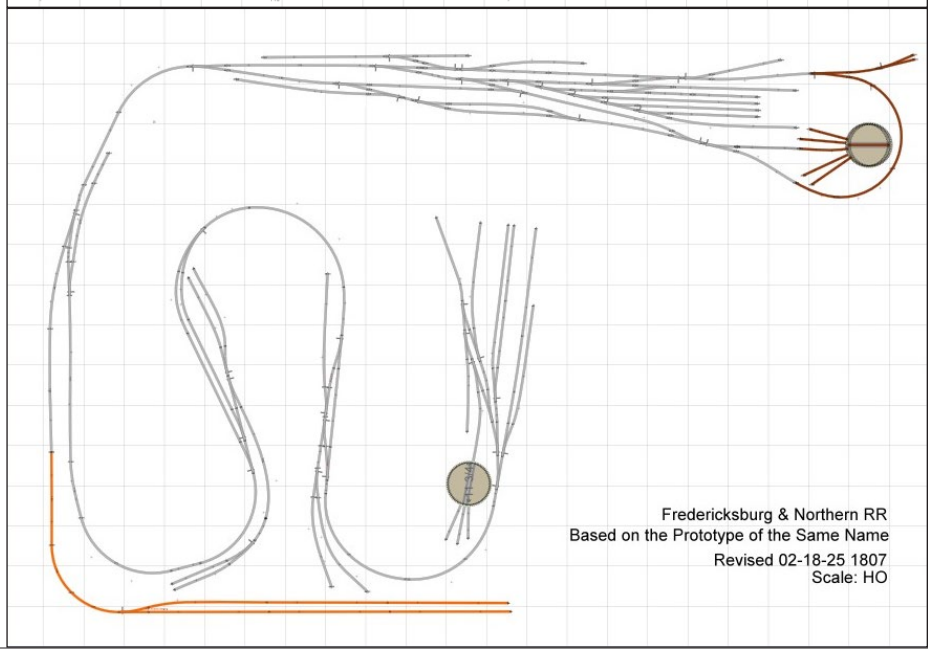


Figure 4, the top view, shows all layers - it's a bit cluttered.

Figure 5, in the middle, shows the plan with the scenery and benchwork layers filtered out.

Figure 6, bottom, shows the most basic view with all layers except the track filtered out.

You can see where the layers are listed and controlled on the left side of FIgure 3 on the previous page.

printing options. In all cases pay attention to the "Print Scale" in the Printing menu. The two options used most often are "Fit to Page" and "Ratio 1:1". If you are printing the entire layout to PDF or on an 8.5x11 sheet of paper, then choose "Fit to Page". If you want to print full size as a track template for your layout, then use "Ratio 1:1"

Printing to a PDF is as easy as going to the print menu and selecting "Microsoft Print to PDF" as your printer. If you'd like a nice large format printout of your layout, then a PDF is the way to go. Print the file to PDF using "Fit to Page" and take the resulting file on a USB drive to your local print shop – the one near me charged $5 for 3 copies on heavy stock 12"x18" each. Because the PDF was created with vector elements by Anyrail, the print shop will be able to enlarge it as needed.

Printing to PDF also provides a way to email your track plan. Send it off to other modelers that you know. It's the best way to get feedback and a sanity check as you work through your ideas.

Printing in full size (1:1): You can print any part of your track plan full size. Some may consider this a waste of paper and a waste of time, but others find it very rewarding for these reasons:

- Allows visualization of the plan in full scale – reveals problems and areas for improvement that are hard to see on a computer screen.
- Provides a template for cutting plywood in freeform.
- Aids in arranging benchwork efficiently.
- Provides a template for laying track. Use a punch wheel and ink or paint to mark the track centerline.

To print in full size, we'll assume that you are using an 8.5x11" home printer. Typically, you will only print a specific area of the track plan, not the whole thing. Take these steps:

1. On the "Show Ribbon Menu", check the "Centerline" box and the "Pages" box.
2. Go to the "File" tab and "Print". In "Print Scale" select the "Ratio" button and enter 1:1. Now go back to the "Home" tab. You should see the pages overlaid on your track plan with page numbers indicated in light blue. At this point note which pages you want to print. See Figure 7.
3. On the "Home" menu select "Layers" and then deselect the layers you don't want to print, if any.
4. On the "Settings" menu select Grid size 12 unless you want to see 1" squares on your printouts.
5. In the "File" tab, select "Print". In "Print Setup" select the printer and in printer properties set the printer to grayscale and Fast or Basic for ink usage. This will save ink. Click "OK" to close the Print Setup window.
6. In the "Print" menu, check "Print Alignment Marks" and "Print Page Numbers". Print date/time/name is your choice.
7. Select the "Pages" button in "Page Range" and type the

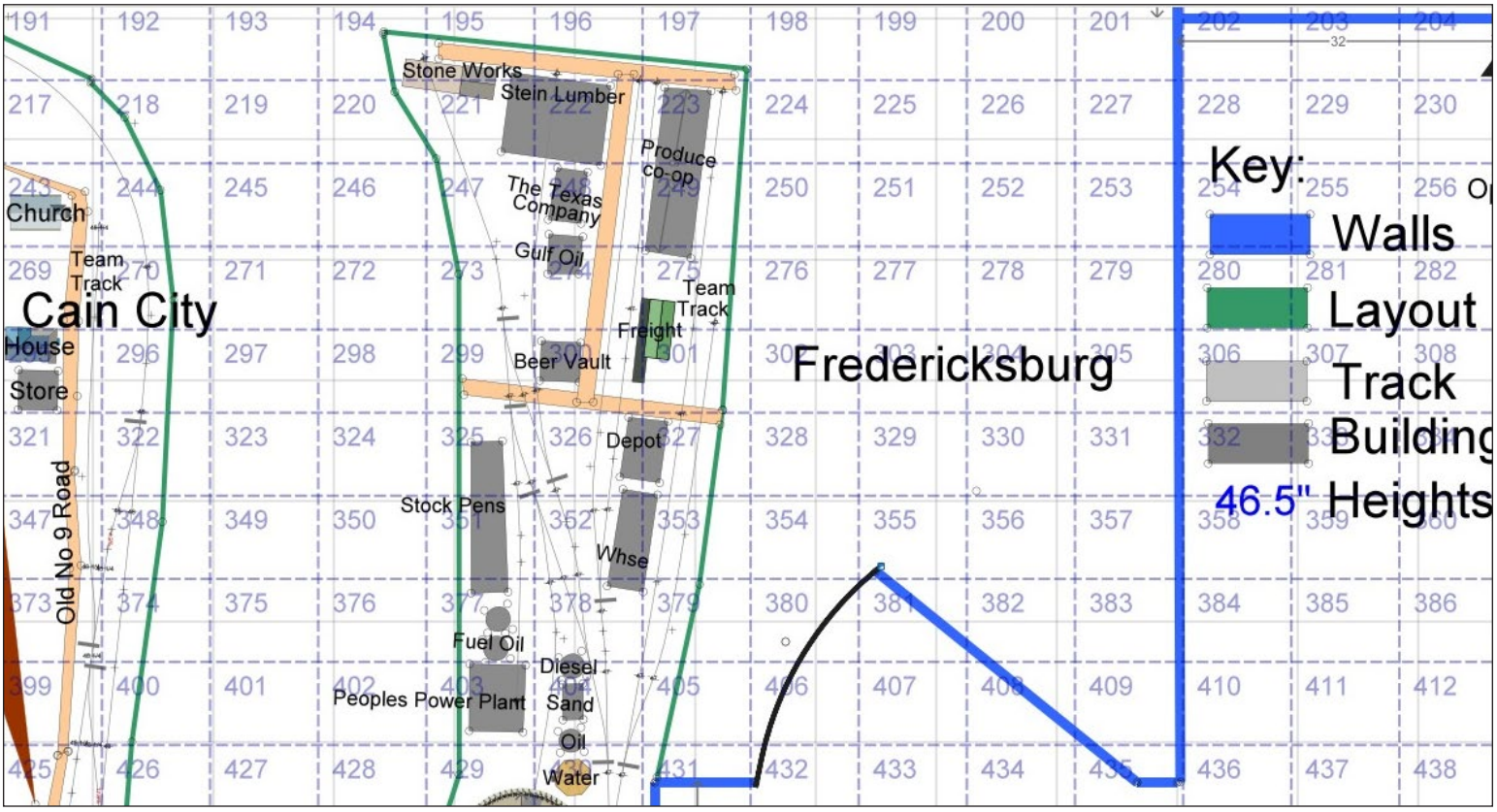


Figure 7: Here is the track plan ready to print the Fredericksburg yard full size. The pages are shown in light blue and dashed lines. You will specify the page numbers that you wish to print in the printing menu. It's easier to select a group of 6-8 pages to print at once rather than trying to print every page in the yard at the same time. Tape the printed pages together using their alignment marks.

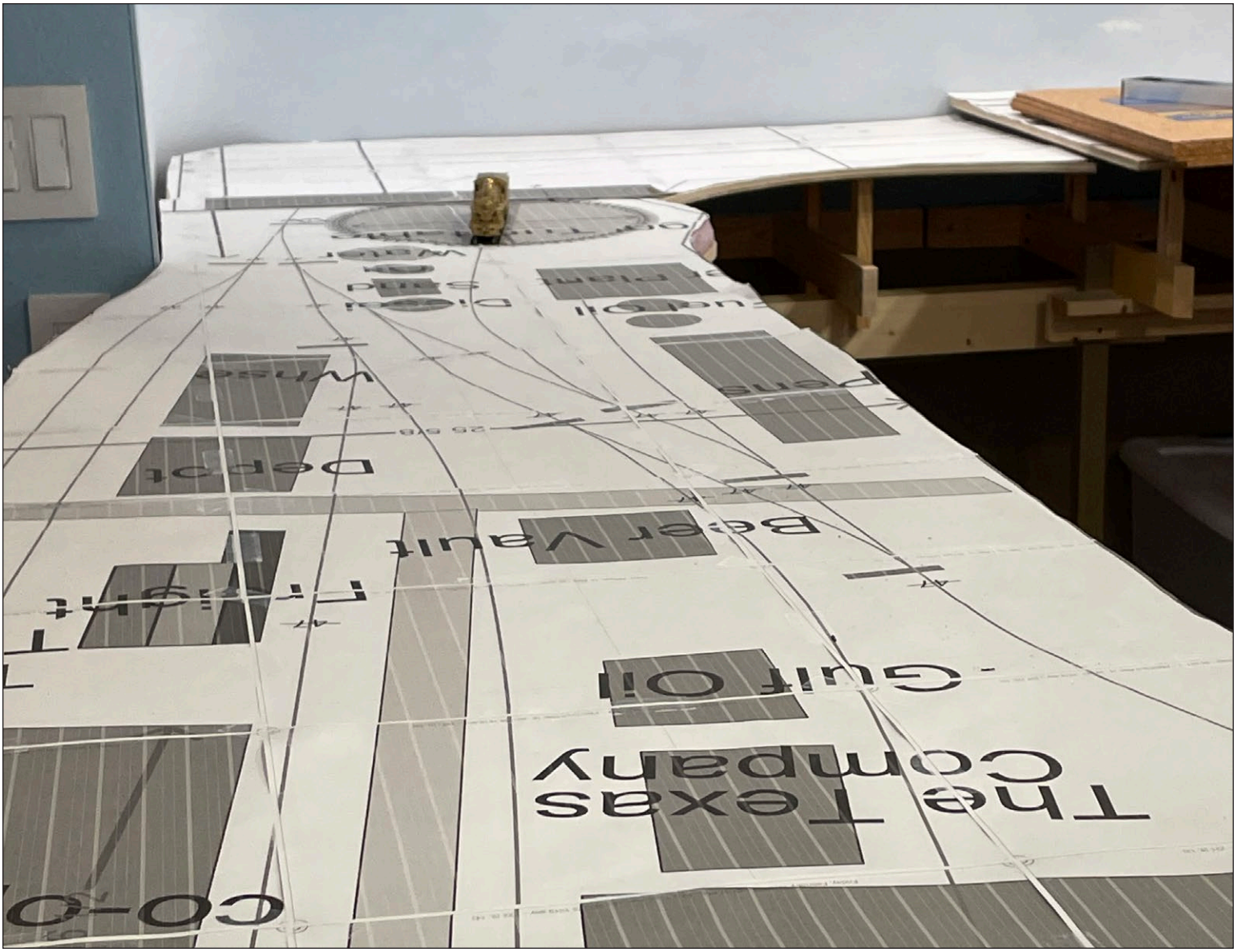


Figure 8: Here a yard area has been printed full size and laid out for marking track locations. The printout shows the track centerline, and a punch wheel will be used to mark through the paper printout.

page numbers you want to print in the box. You can enter consecutive pages separated by a dash and non-consecutive separated by a comma. The top six pages of the Fredericksburg yard in Figure 7 would be entered like this: 221-223, 247-249. If you need the layout edges, expand the pages printed.

8. Now click "Print".

Once you have your printouts, it's time to connect them together. This is best done on a large flat surface printing a maximum of about 4 square feet of pages at a time. The pages have alignment marks to guide the connection of one sheet to another. Use scotch tape to attach pages together. Now you're ready to use your full-size track template. Figure 8 shows a full-size print-out of the Fredericksburg yard on the F&N layout.

Using Track Planning software can be a rewarding way to plan a layout. Used correctly, you will find it can provide a layout that is better planned and more enjoyable as a result. Give it a try! **ML**

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Board of Directors Meeting Notes

MINUTES OF THE LONE STAR REGION BOARD MEETING
Baton Rouge, Louisiana (and Zoom)
January 25, 2024

President Donna Orr called the Annual Board meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

Attendance

All officers, directors, and committee chairs were present except:

Voting Board Members:
Peter Kazmir, Secretary - Proxy: Steve Sandifer
Brooks Willig, Div. 5 Director - Proxy: Steve Sandifer

Non-Voting Board Members:
Duane Richardson, Achievements Chair
Bill Dryden, Events Chair
Riley Triggs, Publicity Chair
Speed Muller, Web Chair

Motion 1: Reading and Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Chuck Lind, MMR provided a motion, and Rod Fredericks seconded, to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the June 2024 Board of Directors meeting and to approve as published in the June 2024 Marker Lamp. The motion passed unopposed.

Board Reports

Reports were provided by all members except for Phil Stewart, Gene Mangum, Bill Dryden, and Chuck Lind.

No changes were made to the submitted reports. Officer reports are as follows:

President – Donna Orr

As we come together as a community of model railroaders, the holidays are a great time to reflect on the unique joy that this hobby brings into our lives. Model railroading is more than just building miniature trains and tracks; it is a celebration of craftsmanship, creativity, and connection.

For many of us, the first spark of interest in model railroads came from childhood memories of watching trains round the Christmas tree. Today, as adults, we find ourselves continuing that journey—transforming a simple interest into intricate designs, realistic landscapes, and stories told through the movement of miniature trains.

At its heart, model railroading is about passion. It's about combining history, technology, and artistry to create something unique that speaks to the imagination. Whether you're focused on precision detailing, historical accuracy, or just the joy of watching trains run, model railroading allows us all to explore, learn, and grow.

The relationships we build along the way with fellow enthusiasts are just as meaningful as the models we craft. The friendships we share with others who understand the dedication and excitement that comes with each project are invaluable. Whether it's through train shows, local clubs, or online communities, the spirit of collaboration helps drive our shared passion forward.

As president, I am honored to be part of this incredible community and to witness the continued growth of model railroading. It's a hobby that constantly evolves—adapting to new technologies and ideas while still honoring the traditions of the past. From digital control systems to the intricate detailing of rolling stock, there is always something new to learn, something new to create, and something new to enjoy. I encourage all of you to continue pushing the boundaries of your creativity, to share your experiences and knowledge, and to inspire the next generation of model railroaders. Whether you are just starting out or have been a seasoned modeler for years, this hobby offers endless opportunities for discovery and achievement.

Merry Christmas!
Donna

Vice-President / Contest Chair – Ray Byer

I hope all who are reading this report are finding themselves in a cool place. As all of you know the LSR is having a Convention in the great state of Louisiana in the city of Baton Rouge in 2025.

Thanks to all the people who made this possible. Working with the Host Group and the LSR, we have come up with a special contest. The special contest will be a Diorama/Cube 12" x12"x12".

Following the same rules for the LSR Contest rules for displays/modules. (Models or modules which include supplemental scenery. For a model to be in the display/module category, the scenery elements are not pertinent to the function of the model or primary structure. The display can be an on-line or off-line model or models.)

So, you ask, how is this different from the standard display/modules that has been entered in the past? Well, you will have to put on your thinking cap.

You see in this special contest, the display must measure 12x12x12, meaning 12 inches in width, 12 inches in depth, and 12 in height, basically a cube. The measurements are the same for ALL SCALES. LSR has had a 12 x12 contest in the past but now we add height to the puzzle. This means nothing above 12" in height above the base of the display. Also to add to the fun, you will need to add seven Items somewhere on your display. They are: an old shack or outbuilding or store, a Pepsi or RC Cola or Dixie beer sign, water, railroad items, a cypress tree or a tree that is in a swamp or by water, magnolia, and a clock.

Some of you are thinking that the small scales will be easy and the large scales will be harder. This may be true - or is it? Remember: think outside of the box. You already have the first step. You are thinking about it. You have the second step. The size of the display. Remember have fun and model.

For more information or contact your LSR Contest Chairperson by email.

Secretary / Publications Chair – Peter Kazmir

Several projects are underway to the benefit of the LSR. We are working on a new, more easily maintainable website (more about that in Speed's report), a convention website that can be used by all LSR conventions going forward with minimal effort, the new museum website, and, after all that is done, an overhaul to how the Marker Lamp is assembled and published to make it much easier (and more collaborative). (This has been discussed in previous BoD meetings.)

The move to the shared Google Drive has gone well. We have a lot of content in the drive already, and more to come.

I'm also happy to report that (with the exception of a small delay last month due to computer issues), the Marker Lamp was published on schedule every issue this past year. I'm also happy to report that many people across the Region contributed excellent content to be included in each magazine. I look forward to continued participation in the coming year.

Treasurer – Steve Sandifer

Financial Year: May 1, 2024 - January 21, 2025

Beginning Balances	**Checking**	**CDs**
Checking	$19,016.30	
CDs		$35,273.07
Income		
NMRA Rebate	$841.00	
2024 Houston Conv.	$4,256.01	
AV Donation	$500.00	
Texas Express	$2,814.60	
Pike Ads	$16.00	
CD Interest		$807.99
Total Income	**$8,427.61**	**$807.99**
Expenses		
Division Rebates	$410.50	
2024 Conv. Dinner	$2,000.00	
2024 Conv. Loan	$1,500.00	
Contest Plaques	$550.00	
Postage	$45.11	
Easels	$194.77	
Projector Screens	$726.00	
Internet (outstanding)	$171.00	
Transfer to CD	$5,000.00	($5000.00)
Total Expenses	**$10,597.38**	**($5000.00)**
Ending Unrestricted Balance		
Checking	$17,017.53	
CDs		$41,081.06
Total Net Worth: $56,845.23		
Restricted Funds		
Division 7 Rebates	$226.50	
CDs	$448.86	
		$548.00
Total Restricted Funds	**$1,253.36**	

Director and Department reports follow the Meeting Notes.

Old Business

LSR Museum

Donna showed the website design mockup for the LSR Museum that was shown at the last Board meeting. The goal of the museum is to provide a complete history of model railroading in the LSR, and of the LSR itself. Each "exhibit" is intended to tell a full story of the subject, not just show some photos and facts.

Bob Barnett said we have collected a large amount of content already and continue to do so. Division directors are asked to help find and contribute content to the committee.

Member Directory

Chuck Lind reported that he has received a number of entries for the new Member Directory. We need to decide how to publish the directory. One option is to make it part of the new LSR website, but that won't be available until later in 2025 at the earliest. Another option is to use an app (as he showed at the last board meeting), at least for now if not permanently. The app is called Instant Church Directory and would cost us $99 per year.

Steve Sandifer reported that it was designed for churches (and so the icon looks like a church steeple) but any non-profit can use it, and that it's simple to use.

It was noted that there is a premium plan, which is $149 per year, which would allow us to customize it more fully for the LSR, remove the "church" labels, that sort of thing. The app also has a web interface we could (at least in theory) integrate with our new website later. There is no limit on the number of members in the app. This plan will be used.

Motion 2: Adopt the Instant Church Directory app for the Member Directory

Chuck made a motion to adopt the Instant Church Directory app for the Member Directory. Ray Byer seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

Youth Award

Chuck Lind reported that we have received two nominations for the Youth Award. (We need more nominations from other Divisions in the future.) Don Winn (from Division 6) nominated Aidan Alvarez, 11 years old. Dick Brannan nominated Wyatt Cook (from Division 1). Wyatt is currently an NMRA member, but Aidan is not.

Motion 2: Awarding of the Youth Award(s)

Chuck made a motion to award the Youth Award to both Aiden Alvarez and Wyatt Cook. Ray Byer seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

After the board meeting a late youth award nomination was received for Reed Leggett, 10 years old from Division 5. Chuck Lind made a motion to amend this motion to include Reed as well. Ray Byer seconded the motion. An email vote passed unopposed.

Constitution and Bylaws Changes

Over the past couple of years, a committee has been reviewing the Constitution and Bylaws to make sure they are clear, in alignment with each other, and that changes over the years have been implemented clearly and appropriately.

The changes to both need to be approved by the Board. The changes to the Constitution will also need to be approved by a vote of the LSR membership, which would take place as part of the March 2025 election.

Motion 3: Adoption of changes to Bylaws

Chuck made a motion to adopt the changes to the Bylaws on January 25, 2025, as per the committee's recommendations (attached to the end of these minutes). Ray Byer seconded the motion. Charles Goodrich noted that the word 'and' was missing from one sentence, and "days" was missing from another sentence. Those additions were made prior to the vote. The motion passed unopposed, and the updated Bylaws were published on the LSR website.

Motion 4: Adoption of changes to Constitution

There was some discussion about a couple of the Constitution changes, primarily around the timing of the annual meeting and removing the requirement that it be held at the LSR convention (to account for events like last fiscal year, where we didn't have an LSR convention during the summer). However, no changes to the recommendation resulted from the discussion.

Ray Byer made a motion to approve and recommend the changes to the Constitution to the members for ratification during the March 2025 election cycle. Rod Frederick seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed. The Constitution changes

were published for the purposes of the election at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ra0VAyDDI87VR-k5iTJhLLGQF72CvfPF/view.

Regional Conventions

To review, Joe Leising had previously reported that the next few conventions would be hosted by:

- 2026: Cen-Tex Division 4
- 2027: Trinity River Division 3
- 2028: South Texas Division 6
- 2029: Cowcatcher Division 1

Donna reminded that each host needs to be aware of and facilitate the communication of the list of registrants with the contest room chair. He or she needs the list ahead of time to recruit judges. In the past, there have been instances of the contest room chair not receiving the list, hampering the contest. This will be explicitly called out in the convention guide.

In addition, there is a set of equipment that is owned by the LSR and used at each convention, including projectors and screens. This list, and a process for handing off the equipment from one convention to the next will be added to the convention guide. Since the list includes over $4000 in equipment, avoiding losses is important.

Finally, for registration, the LSR has a Square POS terminal (including power supply and extra receipt paper) that can be used by host committees. (This is included on the LSR equipment list.)

Chuck Lind and Joe Leising reminded that we discussed last meeting about possibly purchasing an overhead camera for use in clinics at conventions. There was some research done but the one that was proposed was rejected as being too complicated. Deborah Gifford suggested using (or purchasing) a table tripod/mount (only) for someone to use with a phone camera.

Motion 5: Purchase of Camera Equipment for Clinics

Chuck Lind made a motion that we authorize the convention committee (led by Joe) to purchase the appropriate equipment (i.e. an overhead camera and stand/tripod) for a price not to exceed $500. Dick Brennan seconded the motion. The motion passed unopposed.

Ray Byer requested that the convention guide specify that all convention badges (including rails, non-rails, and others) include unique numbers, since these numbers are used for various events. Joe reported that this has already been added to the new guide.

Blues Express 2025

Rod Fredericks introduced his wife Linda and daughter Bridget. He also introduced Casey LeBlanc, Deputy Convention Chairman. Are are contributing heavily to the convention.There are fifteen registrations so far.

Rod is planning on a relatively traditional schedule starting Thursday afternoon (perhaps around 5:00pm, with registration earlier in the day) and ending on Saturday evening, with some off-site activities on Sunday. The schedule is still developing.

Eric Smith and others are helping with publicity. He has written some articles for the Marker Lamp and he is writing the content for the email blasts. The same information will be on the website.

Chuck Lind is the clinics chair, and he is doing a great job putting together an amazing lineup of clinics and clinician. He has fifteen already committed and many more coming.

Ray is planning a traditional contest, plus the special contest of the 12" cube scene.

We are having a harder time finding layouts for the tour and operating sessions, as many good layouts in the area have become unavailable in recent years. So far, four layouts are on the self-driving tour, as far away as Metairie (a suburb of New Orleans) and Jackson (north of Baton Rouge). All four could be visited in one day. The committee is working on adding several more layouts, plus Art Houston's layout (which is a bit further away, in Houma) could be included on Sunday or as an operating session.

We may have the Board Meeting on Saturday around lunchtime, and the membership meeting as part of the Banquet, to free up Saturday afternoon and Sunday for layout tours and operating sessions.

There will also be a layout at the convention itself, which Speed is coordinating.

The guest speaker is still being determined.

There are several general interest and rail prototype attractions all over the area as well, which have been called out in the Marker Lamp and will be noted on the website (with maps).

Divina is putting together a familiar and unique lineup for non-rails as well; initial plans were outlined in her board report.

A reminder to all that early bird registration is now open at https://bluesexpress2025.com.

(After the Board meeting, the Board visited the convention hotel in Baton Rouge.)

Upcoming Election

Deborah wants to encourage everyone to vote for the election this year, which will start on March 1. Donna pointed out we typically only get about 10% of the members to vote - let's blow that away this year.

New Business

Replacement for Bob Thiele as Director of Division 4

Bob Thiele resigned as Director of Division 4 in November 2024, as he moved out of state (and the LSR).

With support from Bob and the Division members, Doug Taylor was appointed by Donna as the replacement to serve the remainder of Bob's term. A vote was held to ratify the appointment and passed unopposed.

90th Anniversary of the NMRA

Donna reported that, on the national RAC call, they asked each region to advertise the 90th anniversary of the NMRA, which we will do via the Marker Lamp and our email list. They also asked each region to consider having some sort of event(s) for the anniversary. The event was mentioned as a point of future discussion, to have folks start thinking about what we (the region) and/or individual divisions might do.

Donna also asked if anyone had any topics related to the Marker Lamp they would like to discuss, and nobody had anything.

Email Communications

Donna communicated that the typical turnaround for an email "blast", from request to sending, is two days. However, in order to protect our email account status (i.e. to not be considered as a source of spam), we have to be careful not to send too many emails in too short of a time, so if multiple requests are received at around the same time, they may be spaced out so that emails aren't sent more often than once every couple days, generally in the order the requests were received.

There was some discussion about how frequent was too frequent. The consensus seemed to be that once a week was generally a good idea with a couple of exceptions noted: 1) we should not resend the same information over and over again, and 2) if we need to send out a notice that someone has passed away, that should be sent out as quickly as possible, overriding other requests.

LSR Website

Donna noted that we will be moving the LSR website from Hostgator to the free hosting provided through the non-profit program (Donna mentioned Google, but it is actually provided by Dreamhost through the same program we access Google for free) by November 2025. At that time, we will change our domain name from lonestarregion.com to lsrnmra.org. (The old domain name will continue to work for a while after the change.)

Website for Regional Conventions

The new website is in the process of being designed and implemented. The first convention that will use the new website will be the 2026 LSR convention; it is expected to be up and running by July 2025.

For each LSR convention, the host committee will have the option to provide content to the LSR web team to be posted or to manage the LSR-provided website mostly themselves. This means that host committees will no longer have to build and manage their own websites, without assistance from the LSR, at their own expense.

To be clear, the host committees will still need to provide content for the website.

Donna showed an early design mockup of what the home page of the convention website could look like. It will be customizable (different colors, fonts, logo, photos, etc.) for each convention.

Motion 6: Meeting Adjournment

Chuck Lind provided a motion, and Roy Kaiser seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unopposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

A Zoom recording of the meeting is available in the LSR's Google Drive at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z_8v0PuqPjAYYA5j_1-1j-arLzwucpS9/view?usp=sharing.

Director and Department Reports

Cowcatcher Division 1

by Dick Brannan
director@cowcatcherdivision.org

cowcatcherdivision.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

Early 2025 has been a pretty busy for Cowcatcher Division members. We had a very informative meeting in January with Steve Crise presenting a great clinic, entitled "Moving Big Boy", followed by the Plano Train Show the following weekend. There was a very heavy turnout for the show which supported the fact that the show hit an all-time record of vendors registered and tables purchased.

February featured a clinic by Mike Mackey, titled "Operate like the Pros: Switching Cars the Prototypical Way." The clinic was well attended with over 50 members in person or via Zoom.

Coming up in March, the Division will be participating in "Train-a-Palooza" at the Grapevine Convention Center on March 8th and 9th 2025. Attendance at this event is very strong and affords the Division a chance to introduce the membership benefits of the NMRA to a large number of participants from Tarrant County and other western counties of the Metroplex.

Dick Brannan
Director – Cowcatcher Division

Bayou Division 2

by Rod Fredericks
fredericks.rod@gmail.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

Since the last Marker Lamp, planning for the upcoming Blue Express 2025, LSR Convention here in Baton Rouge this summer has been paramount in Division 2. The registration site (Bluesexpress2025.com) has been up and running since November. In addition to registration there are numerous articles pertaining to the convention and more will follow as things develop. And of course, the *Marker Lamp* has convention related articles as well both in this issue and past issues.

Local interest in the convention is picking up well. Recently there was a train show here in Baton Rouge, "Train Days at the Library". This show was presented by the Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroaders (*Marker Lamp*, September 2024, pages 17 to 20). Attendance was much higher than expected. I had a table there showing off some of my modeling and promoting the Convention. I was pleased to see the interest shown by many of the people visiting my table. Nearly all took home convention flyers.

The next order of business is the Division 2 Meeting scheduled for March 15th at the Crescent City Model Railroad Club where further convention details will be finalized.

Trinity River Division 3

by Charles Goodrich, MMR
director@cowcatcherdivision.org

trinityriverdivision.org

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

(No new report received.)

Cen-Tex Division 4

by Doug Taylor
director@centexnmra.org

centexnmra.org

I would like to thank everyone for being very welcoming and for coming out to our January meeting or joining online. I've been told it was one of the larger ones recently. It was great meeting everyone and I'd like to meet even more at the next meeting. I'd also like to thank Joe Leising for coming by.

We had a good beginning conversation on the 2026 Regional convention that Division 4 will be hosting. We are going to need a number of volunteers to be able to put on a good convention. I have already heard from some who have said they will assist, and I'd like to hear from anyone in the region who would like to contribute to the success of this. I will be setting up a Zoom call for volunteers within the next week to 10 days to start coordinating. I would also like to hear from anyone who has information on ANY events that would be going on in the May to July timeframe for 2026.

At the January meeting I presented a short clinic of the basics of 3D printing which Cliff has uploaded to the clinic area on the Division website. Sam NiCastro, Tim Giraud, Steve Jackobs, Joel Davidson, and Michael Strittmatter all showcased some very nice items they have been working on.

Joel Davidson hosted a layout and workshop tour this month. Have to love the "escape hatch" in the floor! I am going to start asking now for a couple of short clinics and a layout tour for our next meeting.

We had a Zoom meeting of current volunteers to iron out some of the initial details of the 2026 LSR Convention and it was a great beginning. We are focusing primarily on the location at the moment.

At the March 8th meeting David Nicastro presented a clinic on 17 Ways NOT to Make Snow. Phillip Sharpnack hosted our layout tour this meeting.

The next meeting for the division will be May 10th at the Austin NW Rec center. The meeting will start at 10:00 and as always it will be broadcast live on Zoom. I will send out the link that Thursday. If there is anyone in the LSR who would like to be included in our mailing list (who isn't on it already), please send me an email to director@centexnmra.org and I'll get you added.

Doug

West Texas Division 5

by Brooks Willig
Headroadie2004@gmail.com

Newsletter

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

I would like to thank everyone who has been joining our monthly Zoom meetings. We continue to average 8 to 10 in attendance, and many of them are from other divisions. I would like to thank everyone who attended for their support. Zoom video conferencing is the easiest way for everyone in the division to join and connect since we have members scattered throughout the western half of Texas. Besides a big concentration of members in Lubbock, Amarillo, and Abilene, we have members in Alpine, Midland, and San Angelo.

On our January monthly Zoom Meeting, Matt Lacrouts from Division 2 presented us the history of the Freedom Train.

Brooks Willig did a live demonstration of building turnouts with Fast Tracks fixtures and tools for the February monthly Zoom Meeting.

I need clinicians for the rest of the year. If you have an interesting model railroading topic, please reach out to me. The Division 5 monthly meeting occurs on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7 pm, and we meet entirely online using Zoom. Use this link below to sign up for updates from the division, as well as meeting announcements and the link to join. http://eepurl.com/hRLLm9

Brooks Willig
Division 5 Director

South Texas Division 6

by Roy Kaiser
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Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

Division 6 continues to enjoy a robust attendance at every meeting. Average attendees are averaging between 28 and 32 regularly.

One recent meeting included a clinic by Mr. Edward Flaugher, Texas Train Worx Custom Painter who paints and letters both brass and plastic, steam and diesel locomotives and cars. Don Winn gave a clinic on Scratch building structures from styrene and then conducted a hands-on "Make N' Take" clinic where 12 of us learned the basis of scratch building.

For our next meeting, Don is planning a clinic and another "Make N' Take" session on kitbashing plastic structures using both Walthers and DPM Modulars.

At our last meeting, I presented a slide review of my 45 years' of experience on railroad operations at Cass Scenic Railroad. It was so well received by the membership that I plan to do a follow-up version for a future meeting.

At a previous meeting I presented a clinic on Bridges that will also be presented at the Blues Express Convention in Baton Rouge later this year. This clinic is based on my 30 year career at CSX Transportation which included 25 years as a Manager in the Bridge Department. It provides the attendees an inside look at how to make their model bridges more closely resemble those of the prototype.

Another fixed feature of all our meetings is Robert Thomas' 10-minute Modeling Tips where Robert offers countless ideas and references on every modeling subject imaginable. He has provided information on paints, painting, decals, weathering as well as numerous web sites whereby we can all get enormous amounts of information on any railroad you might have in mind.

We are constantly striving to provide our members with a diverse program that not only covers all aspects of railroad modeling but also gives them a taste of the real thing.

Roy Kaiser
Director, Division 6

North Louisiana Division 7

by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@me.com

It has been very slow in this area right now. We have two large layouts (one NMRA) undergoing repairs and relocation. David Colvin is having a building constructed to house Dr. Kamm's Sue Lines. It will be renamed in the future. Look for some more news come late spring.

The ArkLaTex Modular Club's layout is now in Tom White's home on the second floor, well most of it is, two could not make it around the corner in the stairs. The other 26 did. This is only the second time in club history –the other was at the St. Louis Nationals a few years back-that we have them up and running. Of course, that means no more trains shows for the club.

If you know of anyone looking for an 88 ton GE switcher, please contact the Shreveport Railroad Museum. It is the old power company's switcher from the Arsenal Hill Plant here in Shreveport. They have more equipment than they can possibly ever use/display.

The Canadian Pacific Kansas City's various holiday trains had a very successful year. They now have three different trains just to visit Canada and the United States, and a fourth that is down in Mexico. The holiday season is a major project for the railroad.

Don Kimmell

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Phil Stewart
pstewart1225@yahoo.com

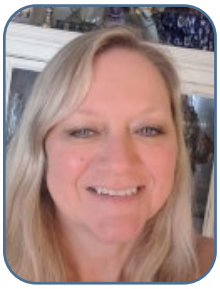
texasgulfdivision.org

No report received for Board Meeting.

Division 8 is again presenting a wide array of clinics in 2025. MMR Pete Leach did an excellent clinic on the Achievement Program in January. Pete answered a lot of our questions and encouraged us to participate in the program. Pete will follow up on a clinic on the transportation of automobiles by rail. We're looking forward to learning about this unique use of the railroads. Our goal is to present a wide array of subjects in our clinics that will be of interest to our members.

We are also putting our judging engineers cap on and judging achievement awards. Division 8 officers and members recently judged a motive power Achievement Award which will be awarded later in the year to Lourdes McCleary. Job well done Lourdes. Congratulations are in order to the folks at the San Jacinto Model Railroad for a successful train show. Numerous vendors, clinic and modular layouts put on a great show. We at the Division always look forward to the San Jacinto Train Show and the largest club in the division never disappoints. Kelly Russell asks us to include a report on the San Jacinto Train Show. Kelly reports that he and Ray Byer led in the contest room, but, "Unfortunately, there were few entries. Randall Wilson entered two scratch-built freight cars (both of which received a merit score). David Bartholomew entered three photos and one diorama. Barry Boggs brought one of his scratch-built F-scale steam engines as a display. We took this opportunity to train four new contest judges. As a reminder, we sponsor the contest room where cars and locomotives can be evaluated using NMRA judging criteria for AP recognition. We need to do a better job of promoting the contest in the future."

Director At-Large



by Deborah Gifford
gifforddeborah5@gmail.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

(No new report received.)

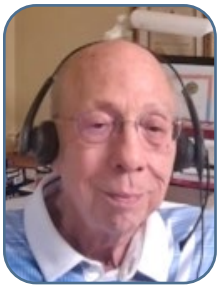
Director At-Large

by Michael Harang
miharang@gmail.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

(No new report received.)

Director At-Large



by Gene Mangum
semangum@windstream.net

No report received for Board Meeting.

(No new report received.)

Achievement Program

by Duane Richardson, MMR
LSR Achievement Chair
pinecreekstation@verizon.net

We had a very good few months with 33 certificates awarded since June 2024. My congratulations go out to the following:

First Name	Last Name	Certificate	Date	LSR Certificate Number
Wayne	Jones	Scenery	6/20/2024	914
Wayne	Kelly	Civil	6/20/2024	915
Edward	McGinley	Chief Dispatcher	7/20/2024	916
Greg	McComas	Electrical	7/20/2024	917
Dick	Brannan	Scenery	7/20/2024	918
Harold	Berenzweig	Scenery	7/20/2024	919
Darrell	Cowles	Official	7/20/2024	920
Darrell	Cowles	Electrical	7/20/2024	921
Darrell	Cowles	Scenery	7/20/2024	922
Darrell	Cowles	Chief Dispatcher	7/20/2024	923
Russell	Gifford	Volunteer	7/20/2024	924
Russell	Gifford	Structures	7/20/2024	925
Russell	Gifford	Scenery	7/20/2024	926
Ezequiel	Duran	Scenery	7/20/2024	927
Chris	Atkins	Civil	7/20/2024	928
Steve	Gratke	Volunteer	7/20/2024	929
David	Steckler	Author	7/20/2024	930
Cole	Rash	Golden Spike	7/20/2024	931
Thomas	Peppers	Golden Spike	7/20/2024	932
Harold	Berenzweig	Golden Spike	7/20/2024	933
Michael	Walter	Golden Spike	7/20/2024	934
Edward	McGinley	Golden Spike	7/20/2024	935
Samuel	Ogden	Author	8/20/2024	936
Harold	Berenzweig	Electrical	8/20/2024	937
Wayne	Kelly	Electrical	8/20/2024	938
Mal	Noone	Golden Spike	8/20/2024	939
Kenneth	kaiser	Scenery	8/20/2024	940
Michael	Ross, MMR	Prototype Modeler	8/20/2024	941
Kimberly	Hays	Volunteer	9/20/2024	942
Mal	Noone	Golden Spike	10/20/2024	943
Eric	Smith	Volunteer	1/20/2025	944
Brian	Helms	Volunteer	1/20/2025	945
David	Grein	Scenery	1/20/2025	946

A quick check of our active members shows we have 8 members with 5 certificates and 1 with 6. I'm hoping to have some new MMR's by the Annual BOD meeting.

Thanks,

Duane Richardson, MMR
LSR AP Chairman

Contests

by Ray Byer
LSR Contest Chair
raybyer@yahoo.com

I hope all who are reading this report are finding them self in a cool place. As all of you know the LSR is having a Convention in the great state of Louisiana in the city of Baton Rouge in 2025.

Thanks to all the people who made this possible. Working with the Host Group and the LSR, we have come up with a special contest. The special contest will be a Diorama/Cube 12" x12"x12".

Following the same rules for the LSR Contest rules for Displays/ Modules. (Models or modules which include supplemental scenery. For a model to be in the display/ module category, the scenery elements are not pertinent to the function of the model or primary structure. The display can be an on-line or off-line model or models.)

So, you ask, how is this difference from the standard Display / Modules that has been entered in the past? Well, you will have to put on your thinking cap.

You see in this special contest, the display must measure 12x12x12, meaning 12 inches in width, 12 inches in depth, and 12 in height, basically a cube. The measurements are the same for ALL SCALES. LSR has had a 12 x12 contest in the past but now we add height to the puzzle. This means nothing above 12" in height above the base of the display. Also to add to the fun, you will need to add seven Items somewhere on your display. They are: an old shack or outbuilding or store, a Pepsi or RC Cola or Dixi beer sign, water, railroad items, a cypress tree or a tree that is in a swamp or by water, magnolia, an a clock.

Some of you are thinking that the small scales will be easy and the large scales will be harder. This may be true - or is it? Remember: think outside of the box. You already have the first step. You are thinking about it. You have the second step. The size of the display, remember have fun and model.

For more information or contact your LSR Contest Chairperson by email.

Conventions

by Joe Leising
LSR Conventions Chair
joe@leising.com

Report for the Board Meeting:

Arrangements are quickly coming together in preparation for the 2025 LSR Regional Convention, the Blue Express 2025, to be held in Baton Rouge, LA on June 26 – 28, 2025. www.BluesExpress2025.com website has been created and discounted Early Bird convention registration is now available until May 15th.

The host hotel and convention activities are all under one roof, and hotel reservations to receive the conventions group rate are available on the www.BluesExpress2025.com website. The hotel page will default to arrival on Thursday, June 26 and departure on Sunday, June 29, but these dates can be changed to one day before and after the convention dates to allow convention attendees to have time to explore the many splendors that Baton Rouge has to offer, and still get the conventions group hotel rate.

The clinic schedule will include clinicians from multiple NMRA regions, and many clinics will be presented for the very first time at a LSR regional convention. www.BluesExpress2025.com will be updated as the clinic schedule is finalized, so make sure to check back often to help make your plans for another fun filled LSR regional convention.

The Non-Rails program is being finalized and will have activities that will appeal to both Rails and Non-Rails alike. Activities will take place both at the convention venue and in the city of Baton Rouge. Again, check the www.BluesExpress2025.com website often to learn about the robust Non-Rails activities as they are posted.

I had the opportunity to attend the January Cen-Tex Division 4 meeting. It was great to see old friends and to make new ones. New Division Director Doug Taylor graciously allowed me time to make a presentation for the Blues Express 2025 convention to the Cen-Tex members. My presentation was followed by a discussion amongst the Cen-Tex members as they prepare for the LSR regional convention in 2026.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Baton Rouge for the Blues Express 2025 LSR regional convention. Visit the www.BluesExpress2025.com website often to stay updated on the activities of another exciting LSR convention.

The Blues Express 2025 LSR Annual Convention is chugging along and will soon be pulling into the station in Baton Rouge, LA. The convention promises a good time for everyone.

Along with other members of the LSR Board of Directors, I was able to visit the convention's host hotel during the LSR Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting in January. The hotel has been recently updated and has very nice overnight accommodations, a restaurant and lounge, and a huge atrium lobby for gathering with old friends and making new friends. The hotel has a discounted group rate for the convention, with a May 15th deadline to make hotel reservations and receive the conventions discounted rate. Reservations can be made on the convention's website, www.BluesExpress2025.com, and then selecting the "Book Hotel Rooms" link. The page will default to arrival on June 26 for three nights for a room for one person, and this can be changed at the top of the page, including the dates of stay as the group rate is available both before and after the convention. Special note: When you arrive at the hotel, purchase discounted breakfast tickets, $10.00 for 2 people, and save $$$.

An exciting clinic schedule featuring clinicians from the NMRA Lone Star, Southeastern, and Mid-Continent Regions is available for review at www.BluesExpress2025.com. Clinicians from outside of the LSR include Dean Smith(MCoR), Pat McCarthy (SER), Walt Liles (MCoR), and Craig Brotman of AK Products. Tied into the convention's location, there will be clinics germane to Louisiana, and the state's rich railroading history. There will also be hands-on clinics on building a Speeder Shed and learning 3D Aided Design for Model Railroading that require special registration and have limited seating, so register now to make sure you can participate in these hands-on programs.

The Non-Rails program also includes hands-on Arts & Crafts activities, fun and games, and a tour of the Louisiana State Capitol with an observation deck on the 27th floor. Clinics include an opportunity to ask a medical professional question about your health and how to become a better poker player from an individual that has participated in national poker tournaments.

Operating sessions will take place on-site at the Holiday Inn Baton Rouge South host hotel on Thursday and Friday evenings. Registration for operating sessions is available at www.BluesExpress2025.com. Additional operating sessions

will take place throughout southern Louisiana. Make sure to sign-up now to secure your spot for operating sessions. Operating Sessions information updates can be found by periodically checking www.BluesExpress2025.com.

Layout visits will also take place during the Blues Express 2025 LSR convention. As it has been over 30 years since a LSR convention has taken place in Louisiana, this may be an opportunity to visit layouts that you have never seen before. Periodically visit www.BluesExpress2025.com for updated information.

There is still time to put the finishing touches on the Contest Room special convention category, the 12"x12"x12" diorama. Details for the special category are available in this issue of *The Marker Lamp*. The LSR Contest Room is located on the second floor, and is only accessible by a wide flight of stairs. Individuals with large or heavy entries will need to be prepared in getting their entries to/from the contest room.

The registration fare for NMRA members includes the Saturday evening banquet. Non-Rail and Youth registrations will need to add a banquet ticket to their convention registration if they are planning on attending the Awards Banquet.

It has been reported that the bridge crossing the Mississippi River on Interstate 10 can get congested during the afternoon rush hour, starting about 2:00pm. When making travel plans, consider traveling to Opelousas, LA then taking Highway 190 going East which will take you directly to the Holiday Inn Baton Rouge South at 9990 Airline Highway, Baton Rouge, LA.

Register today for the annual Lone Star Region convention, the Blues Express 2025. Registration is available on the convention's website at www.BluesExpress2025.com, as well as additional convention information. Then visit the website often as convention arrangements and schedules are being finalized. Additional convention information can be found in the September and December 2024 editions of The Marker Lamp, as well as the current issue.

Who dat that's going to enjoy the Blues Express 2025 LSR convention? Only those that participate, so do not miss out, register today, at www.BluesExpress2025.com!

Historian

by Bob Barnett, MMR
LSR Historian
rbarnettmopac@gmail.com

Report for the Board Meeting:

I am pleased to report we have made major progress in assembling information for the new Lone Star Region's Digital Museum. Happily, as we turn over more rocks looking for photographs of layouts and people, we jog the memories and uncover a lot of old photos and slides of more and more members. In the last few months several people have contributed large collection of images or written information.

Craig Brantley of Houston took photos during the annual fall layout tours sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. He recently sent me a thumb drive of hundreds of images of layouts taken on the tours since he "went digital" and loaned stacks of photos that I scanned to further add to the total collection.

As a result, we now have photos of the following layouts in the Houston/Gulf Coast area:

- Al Hague-N
- All Points North-HO Hon3
- Art Borman-HO
- Bill Wright-ho
- Bob Barnett-HO
- Bob Dannenbrink-HO
- Bob Sandhaas-HO
- Bob Were-S
- Bruce Sommers-HO
- Carl Lester-HO
- Charlie Caggiano-G
- Cliff Cheeseman-HO
- Craig Raymond-Sn3
- Dan Stuettgen-Fn3
- David Malloch-HO
- David Ray-O
- Denny McGonigle-HO
- Don Bozman-HO
- Ed Dibble-HO
- Eddie Carrill-HO-HOn3
- Fred Holland-HO
- Gilbert Freitag-HO
- Gordon Bliss-N
- Greg Johnson-N

- Houston Area Live Steamers-1 1/2"
- Houston Model RR Club-O
- Jeff Clodfelter-HO
- Jerry Ondak-HO
- Jim Lemmond-HO
- Jim Lingenfelter-Hon3
- Jim Long-HO-Hon3
- Kem Stanley-On3
- Loren Neufeld-On30
- Mike Spoor-HO
- On3 Guild-On3
- Paul Cesak-On3
- Paul Patti-N
- Pete Leach-On30
- Peter Bryan-HO
- Randall Wilson-HO
- Richard Gemp-HO
- Robert Ashcraft-HO
- Steve Sandifer0HO
- Ted Doyle-O
- Terry Humbrickhouse-HO
- Tuffy Henderson-N
- Wes Moreland-O

Through the efforts of Chuck Lind, Jay Miller has contributed a collection of images from early Dallas area layouts and several images of early members and founders of the LSR. Jay had a career as a photographer and later owned a graphics company so his work is excellent. Jay's father was a model railroader and Jay was a member of the Houston Society of Model Engineers back in the 1970's when he lived in Galveston. He later lived in Dallas and for many years had a well-known Santa Fe layout there. His collection dates back for decades and he has promised to look for more. We are very indebted for the images of early LSR conventions that are likely not available anywhere else. Images on the disk include:

- Bill McClanahan- T&RGW
- Cliff Robinson-Marquet Union Terminal
- Chip Romig-S-Scale
- Leroy King-Traction
- Jack Leming -HO
- Jay Miller-HO
- Lloyd Keyser-HO
- John Lott-Lubbock

Perhaps more important for the LSR Digital Museum, he provided some images of early LSR members, mostly from the Dallas area. He also included a few shots reported to be from the first LSR Convention (in Fort Worth in 1951) or perhaps the organizational meeting in Dallas in April 1951. A Partial list includes:

- Cliff Robinson
- Bill McClanahan
- Bobby Hall
- Terry Walsh
- Malcolm Vordenbaum
- Eunice Linda

A file from the 1975 LSR Convention held in Houston includes images of much younger versions of:

- Gil Freitag-Houston
- John Lowrance-San Antonio
- Ben Pearlman-Houston
- Howard Van Auken-San Antonio
- Ken Caulking-Houston
- Bruce Blalock-Houston
- Bob Dannenbrink -Houston
- Bob Fisk-Houston
- Bill Simms-Dallas
- Bill Hounsil-Refugio
- John Weiss-Houston
- Barry Boggs-Houston
- Arman Lowen-Houston
- Group shot achievement winners

I prevailed on Darrell Cowles with the Texas Westen to provide a club history which he sent along with a link to club photos. I am preparing a detailed history of the San Jacinto Club in Houston. I have asked John Lowrance with SAMRA to provide (or find) a history of that vintage club is San Antonio.

Obviously, this is a lot of information to process and a lot of images to categorize. But we have an excellent start. Articles in the Marker Lamp and inquiries regarding photos, clubs and early modelers typically trigger someone to "go to the closet "and look for old photos, slides, club rosters, etc.

Respectfully submitted:
Bob Barnett
LSR Historian

Education

by Don Winn, MMR
LSR Education Chair
donswinn@gmail.com

Report for the Board Meeting:

I have communicated to the other board members the goal of tracking our education activities in support of our 501c3 education charter. I have provided them with a simple tracking spreadsheet to record their activities for the year, and will compile them at the end of the fiscal year.

I have been using my Marker Lamp reports to encourage members to get involved in the education aspect of our hobby by presenting clinics and writing articles.

Howdy,

This month I would like to about the NMRA Achievement Program. It's a great program that encourages us to participate in many different aspects of our hobby. After you have earned 7 of the 11 certificates you are named an MMR, but like any rail trip, the journey is just as rewarding as the destination.

The Author AP certificate asks us to share what we know, by writing articles and presenting clinics to our fellow railroad enthusiasts. Oh, you don't need to a great writer to create articles. Your software program can spell check and grammar check for you. The *Marker Lamp* is always looking for material and would be happy to publish what you have.

I'm inviting YOU to come to my clinic at the upcoming Blues Express convention in June. The title of the clinic is "If you See Something, Say Something", borrowing the phrase from the citizen action campaign. But in this case it simply means that if there is some part of the hobby that interests you, please share it with your modeling friends. In the clinic I'll provide ideas on how to share what you know and earn your Author AP certificate.

I hope to see you at the Blues Express in Baton Rouge!

Thank You!
Don Winn
Education Chair

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING,
SAY SOMETHING.
TELL A COP OR WRITE AN ARTICLE
OR PRESENT A CLINIC. COME ON, IT'S EASY
Taking steps towards earning your Author AP certificate

Membership

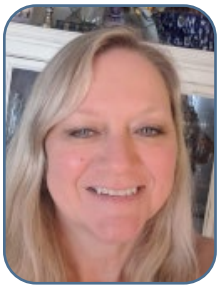
by Jared Roberts
LSR Membership Chair
jlroberts0418@gmail.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

No rerails this month or deceased this month.

	2024											2025	
Division	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**
One	189	184	182	178	180	178	172	168	167	172	166	171	166
Two	87	81	81	82	85	84	83	83	83	84	84	81	81
Three	206	205	191	191	190	189	178	175	167	166	166	171	173
Four	143	141	128	124	127	129	130	132	131	128	124	129	128
Five	36	34	33	28	30	30	29	29	29	28	27	28	30
Six	80	80	75	74	76	76	76	75	72	76	77	75	77
Seven	25	24	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	23
Eight	206	204	199	199	194	193	199	200	198	195	192	194	194
LSR Total	**972**	**953**	**911**	**898**	**903**	**900**	**888**	**881**	**868**	**872**	**857**	**871**	**872**

Nominations/Elections



by Deborah Gifford
LSR Nominations Chair
gifforddeborah5@gmail.com

Report published in December 2024 Marker Lamp was submitted for the Board meeting.

(No new report received.)

Non-Rail

by Divina Gato-Hogno
LSR Non-Rail Chair
d.gatohogno@gmail.com

LSR Blues Express 2025 Non-rail activities

Non-Rail Contests
(Attach write-up sheet for each entry) - deadline for submission June 27, 2025 (Friday) PM (refer to convention booklet for cut-off time on Friday)

Categories:

- General
- Needlework
- Railroadiana – any railway related crafts

Theme: LSR Blues Express 2025*

**Theme is not a category listed in the 2020 NMRA contest form- Please check the "General category for the NMRA contest entry form when submitting entry at the Contest Room. Please indicate "Theme" on the NMRA Judges Scoresheet.*

Non-Rail Activities
Day 1: June 26- Thursday

PM: 5 pm to ??? : Welcome socials with other non-rail attendees. (Room to be assigned) Crafts:

- LSR 2025 Pine Cone Christmas ornament

- Modpodge/design tape Jewelry box

Day 2: June 26- Friday

9 AM: Trip to Baton Rouge attraction (self-drive/car-pool)

- Louisiana State Capitol/ the Old State Capitol (FREE) and other sites.
- For those not joining the excursion to Baton Rouge attractions, you may continue on the crafts project in the non-rail room.

5 PM: Bingo- Come play for exciting prizes.

- Continue Modpodge/design tape Jewelry box

8 PM: Open Forum- Your medical questions answered

Day 3- June 27- Saturday

AM: 9am-12 noon. Bracelet/necklace making session. (Will close this session by 12 noon).

- Continue Modpodge/design tape Jewelry box

PM: Learn Poker from the experts- Linda & Bridget Fredericks

Other activities available as per interest: Puzzles, card games, etc. Activities may be subject to change.

Web

by Gert "Speed" Muller
LSR Web Chair
lsrwebchair@huntatrophy.com

The web site is still up and running with hosting services paid through December 14, 2025. At which point, or earlier, we will switch to the Google Non-profit account benefits.

The new National Membership System at Association Sphere is getting closer and closer to go live, and the possibility of doing our Regional Convention registration using it is still there, but not this or next year. We will use a system similar to the Baton Rouge convention for the next event, but the region will help, don't fear.

The web service hosting our *Marker Lamp* went through a little nightmare situation, but all is back to normal. You can access all the online magazines again.

I also want to encourage you to look into getting online with Discord to access the NMRA Interchange, and to share your modeling so the NMRA membership can see it world wide (https://www.nmra.org/members/nmra-interchange). There is also the National Magazine in digital, so you can read it where ever you have internet. (https://www.nmra.org/members/nmra-digital-magazine)

Run some trains!

Speed Muller
LSR Web Chair

Youth

by Chuck Lind, MMR
LSR Youth Chair
chucklind46@gmail.com

No report was submitted for the Board meeting, though Youth nominations were discussed and voted upon.

(No new report received.)

Registration is **Open** at BluesExpress2025.com

The 2025 Lone Star Region Convention will be held in held in Southern Louisiana for the first time in thirty years and you won't want to miss it! There will be layout and other railroading opportunities you've probably never seen, in a region rich with interesting and exciting sights. (And food!)

June 26 - 29, 2025

Holiday Inn Baton Rouge South
9900 Airline Highway
Baton Rouge, LA 70816

Visit BluesExpress2025.com to register, make hotel reservations, and see updates on convention activities. More details are being added all the time.

Register today for the Early Bird Discount!
Mark your calendars now and plan to attend!

Don't forget to

VOTE

in the LSR election before March 31!

You are voting for:

LSR President • LSR Treasurer
Division 1 Director • Division 3 Director • Division 5 Director • Division 7 Director
plus updates to the LSR Constitution
(see Board of Director meeting notes for details)

To vote, go to:

https://forms.gle/CU3Dm1oTyAoCzfB16

Questions? Please contact Nominations Chair Deborah Gifford at gifforddeborah5@gmail.com BEFORE you vote.

Do you live in central Texas?

Whether you're new to model railroading, want a large layout but don't have the room, or just want to hang out with friends...

Come join us!

The Austin Model Railway Society is an HO scale club. Members of all ages meet monthly and participate in many ways, from electronics to scenery to operations.

AUSTIN MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY
EST AMRS 2017

For more information and how to join, check out our website at austinrailway.org!

This is healthcare?

Your passion for model railroad is healthcare. **Really.**

Research shows that participating in groups like the **National Model Railroad Association** improves our mental, physical, and social health. It's called "Social Fitness," and it's the perfect replica of your favorite track.

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GET OUT THE WORD!

Color

Ads Available

Raise awareness for your business, model railroad, club or event while supporting the Lone Star Region by placing an ad in the Marker Lamp.

- Want to let everyone know about your latest product?
- Looking to build membership in your club?
- Want to attract model railroaders to your show?
- Do you have a special feature or crack express train on your layout?

Let everyone know about it with a color ad!

100% NMRA clubs and LSR divisions receive a $30 discount - the equivalent of a free half-page ad!

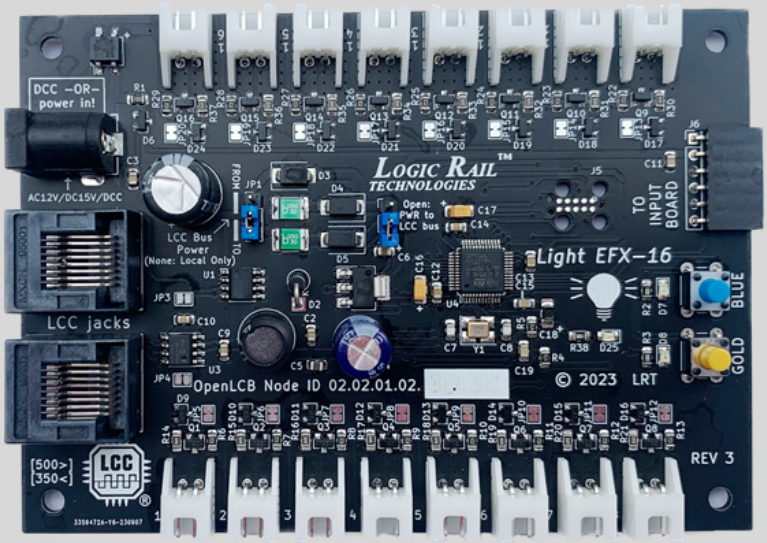
Ad prices per year (four issues):

- Full page: $50
- Half page: $30 (horizontal or vertical)
- Quarter page: $15
- Pike ads (~1/8 page): $8

For more information or to submit an ad, contact:

Steve Sandifer
steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net

Light EFX-16



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Peter Kazmir Photo

PIKE ADS

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Bill Dryden
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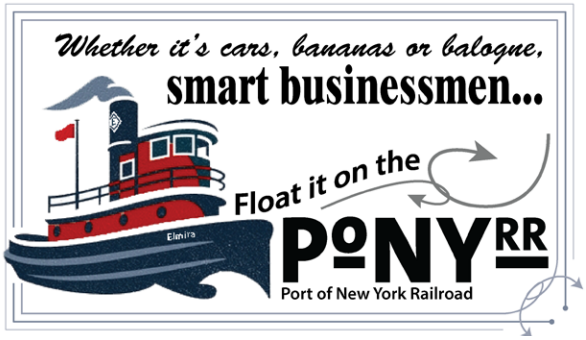
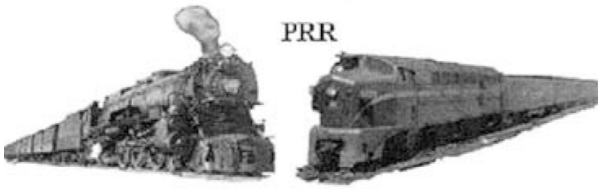
bdlr149@airmail.net
Life Member NMRA & LSR



Riley Triggs | ponyrr.blogspot.com

THE ALLEGHENY RAILROAD
HORSESHOE CURVE
ALTOONA



Jerry Schoenberg
Carrollton, Texas (972) 242-9053
arrjerry@aol.com

Pennsylvania Railroad
Laurel Valley Secondary

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There's plenty of room for more - add your pike today!

The Marker Lamp

Submission deadline for next issue is May 15